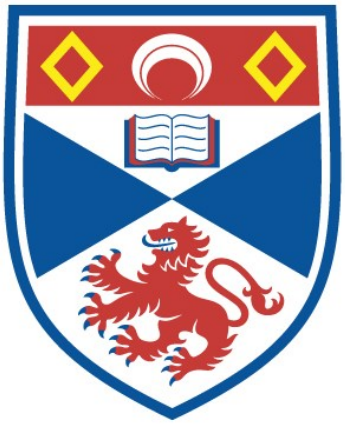
"NGANAMPALAMPA - DEFINITELY ALL OURS" : THE CONTESTATION AND APPROPRIATION OF ULURU (AYERS ROCK) BY TOURISTS AND ABORIGINES

Kim Fleet

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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Kim Fleet

Thesis submitted for degree of PhD
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September 1999

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Abstract

The thesis examines the response of Aborigines (Anangu) to the situation of mass tourism at Uluru (Ayers Rock) in central Australia. When tourists visit Uluru, the harsh environment brings them into a sudden, often unpleasant, awareness of their own bodies. This corporeal consciousness affects the interest they have in regard to those living there long term (Anangu, Park rangers, and workers in the tourism industry). Consequently, the questions tourists ask about Anangu focus on how *they* cope with life in this harsh area. To Anangu, though, Uluru and the surrounding area is a political and ideological landscape. They wish to educate tourists about the meanings the land has for them, using stories from the *Tjukurpa* (Dreaming) to illustrate how Anangu see their place in the world: as rightful owners and custodians of Uluru. Unfortunately, tourists have experienced a shift from the familiar, intellectual realm to a physical realm of senses and body processes, and their interest is not in Anangu ideology and politics, but in the maintenance of Anangu bodies. A tension occurs when Anangu force tourists to consider Aboriginal culture through their message of not climbing Uluru, the intended activity for the majority of tourists. This message articulates the differences between Anangu and tourists, and in recent years it has become more strident, to the extent of altering *Tjukurpa* stories to illustrate it. Anangu engagement with tourism is used to promote political messages; but the success of this endeavour depends on the tourists' own experience of the landscape.

Further, the thesis offers an ethnography and analysis of the lives and communities that constitute various categories of white workers in the area

and demonstrates their attitudes both towards each other, and to Anangu and tourists.

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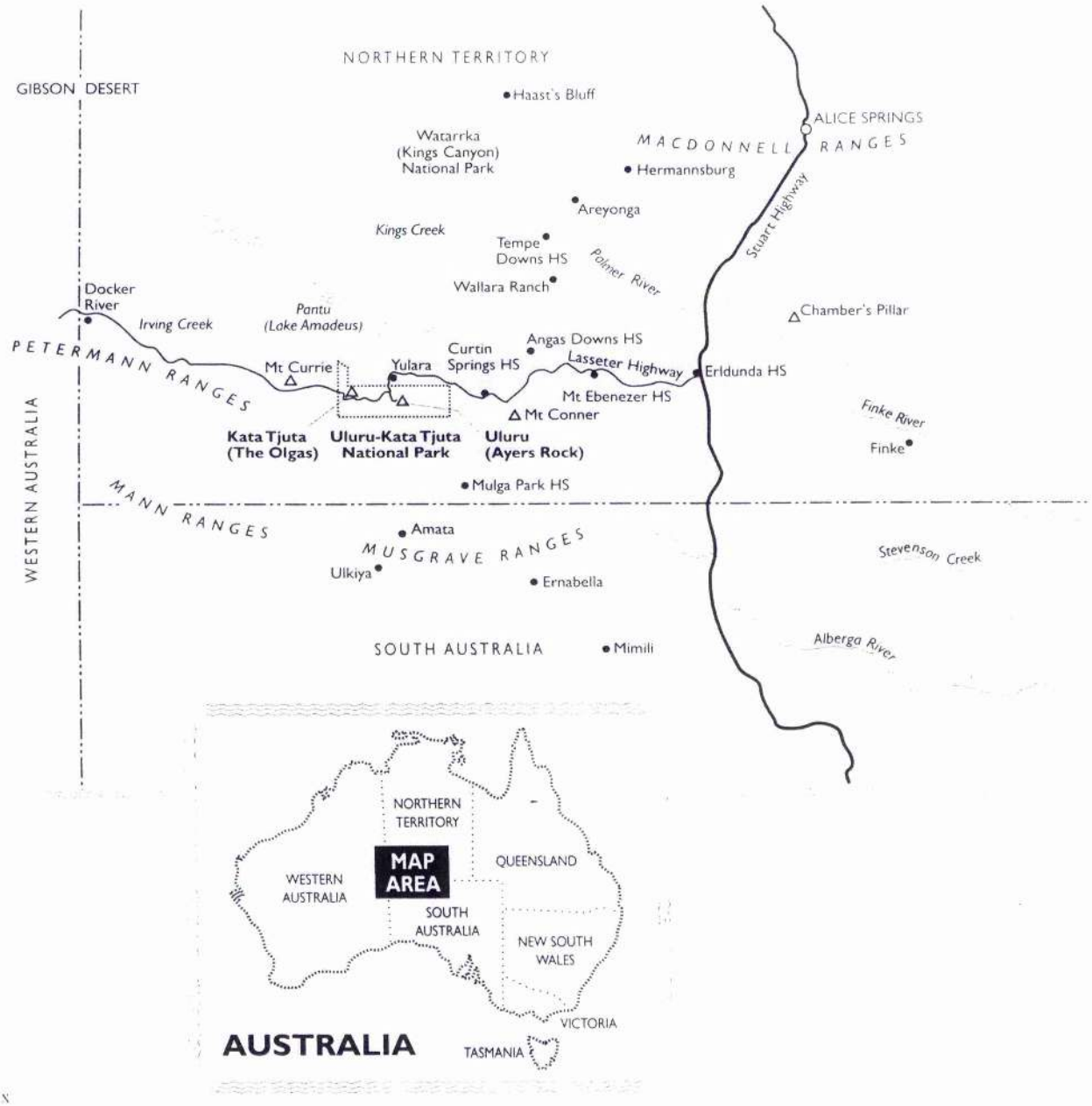
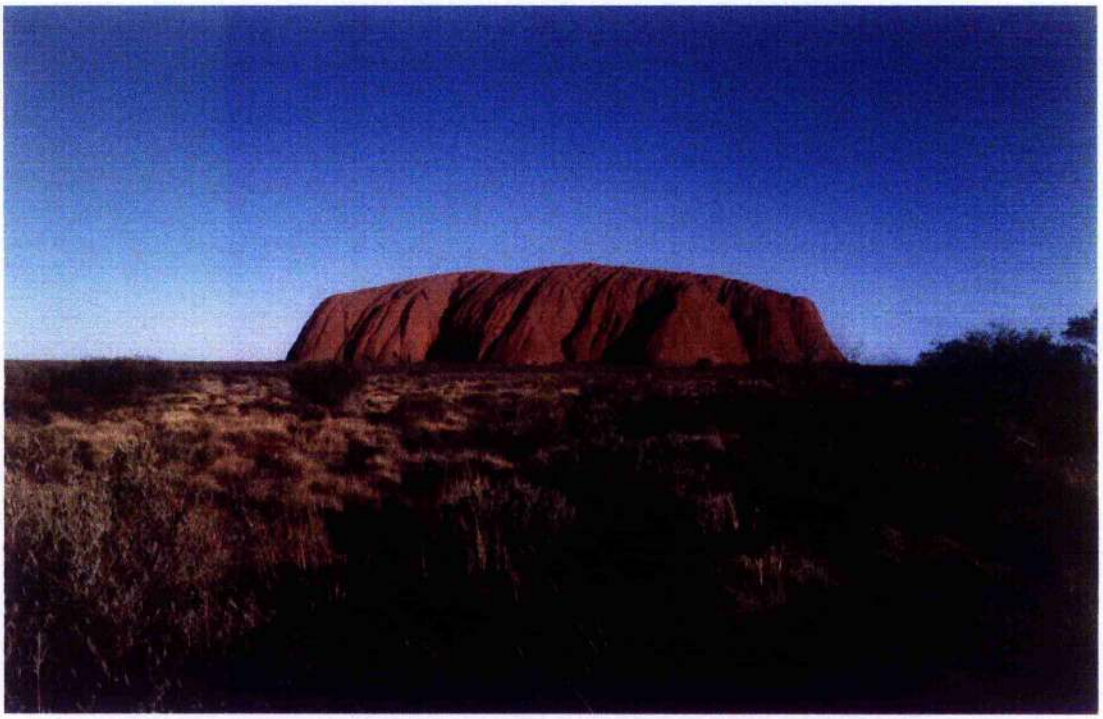
Acronyms and Abbreviations

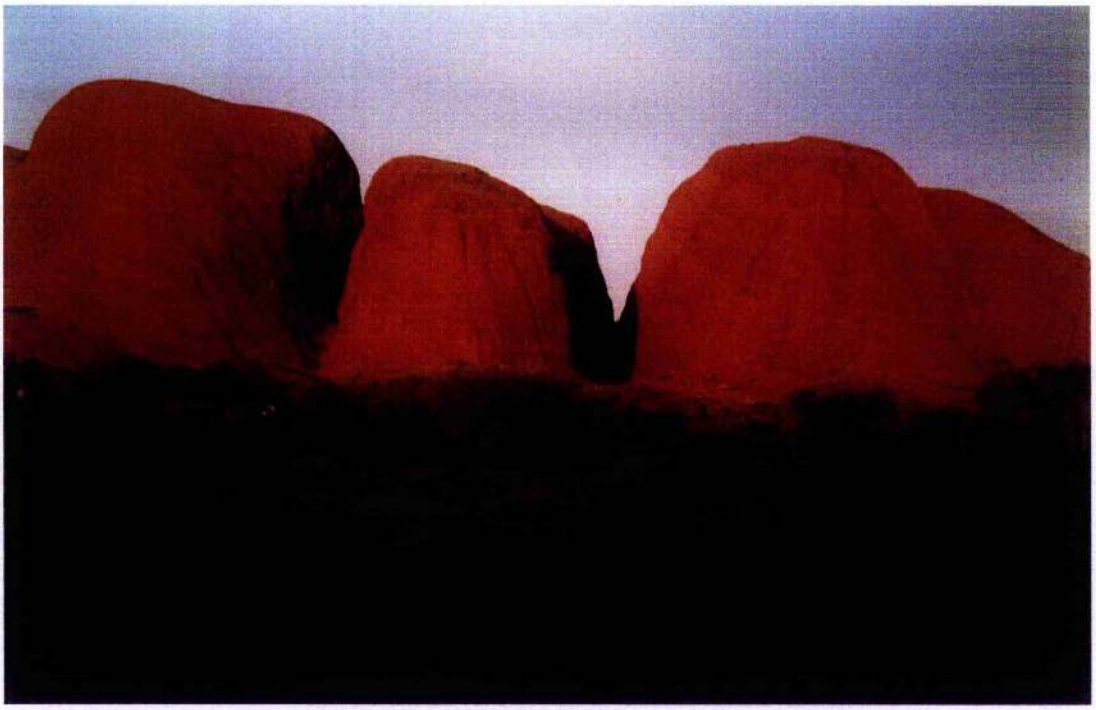
ANCA	Australian Nature Conservation Agency
ANPWS	Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service
ARRC	Ayers Rock Resort Company
ARRM	Ayers Rock Resort Management (title of ARRC from December 1997 onwards)
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
CCNT	Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory
NTTC	Northern Territory Tourism Commission
PAN	Parks Australia North
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
VMS	Visitor Management Strategy



Location of Uluṟu – Kata Tjuṯa National Park
(Source: S. Breeden *Uluṟu: Looking After Uluṟu – Kata Tjuṯa the Aṉangu Way.)*



Uluṟu



Kata Tjuta

Introduction

It is 5am. The black, hulking shape of Uluṟu rises eerily from the flat desert plain. A cold, sharp wind snaps around the mulga and Desert Oak trees. Some say this wind is the breath of Kurpany, an evil dingo from the *Tjukurpa*, the Dreaming.

I step from the bus into the chill morning air, my face stung by sand, and watch the assortment of tourists as they fiddle with backpacks, rummage for fly nets, slap on sunscreen. I stand, booted, hatted, equipped; patiently waiting for the fussing to cease. When finally the fidgeting stops, I address the small group in front of me.

"Good morning, everyone. Before we start, can I get you to introduce yourselves to the rest of the group."

I won't ever remember a single name, but it gets you used to talking to each other, and particularly to me.

"My name's Kim, and I'm your guide for this morning."

I'm an anthropologist, and you are my unwitting subjects.

"So if you have any questions or queries at all, don't be frightened to ask."

Ask me about the Aborigines. You must want to know about the Aborigines.

"Any questions before we get going?"

A young boy immediately raises his hand. "Where's the bathroom?"

I explain to him the procedure for relieving oneself in the bush, request that people do not photograph the sacred sites, and we set off on our 9.5 km

walk around the base of Uluṟu. By the time we finish the temperature will be up in the 40s Celsius, and I will be scouring their faces for the first signs of heat stress. After I deposit them back at their air-conditioned hotels, I scurry home to write about the questions they had, and the attitudes they hold towards the traditional owners of this harsh land.

Aims of the study

Australian Aborigines have long been the staple of anthropological writing. They were seen by Victorian Social Darwinists as the archetypal original humans: the exemplars of all societies' stone-age roots. Initially of interest to anthropologists for their many languages, totemic groups, purported ignorance of physiological paternity, and complicated kinship systems, later anthropological work with Aborigines focused on the relationship between Aborigines, the Dreaming and the land (McKnight 1990). With the passing of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, such work took on a heightened importance, now informing both legislation and the legal practitioners who handle land claims cases instigated by Aborigines. More recently, anthropologists have turned to issues of Aboriginal identity, especially in the light of the increasing recognition of urban Aborigines. Traditional anthropological fieldwork concentrated on nomadic hunter-gatherer Aborigines, often portraying them as such even though they may be in settled communities, or distant from their traditional lands. More recently anthropologists have explored the adaptability of Aboriginal culture to external pressures, how cultural traditions endure though separated from their

traditional lands, and how Aboriginal groups respond to new political and economic climates.

Aboriginal culture has of necessity adapted to demands and external pressures. Though unreasonable to assume that pre-contact there was an unchanging tradition for 40,000 years, the post-colonial history has brought dislocation, interference, rape and genocide. The evils visited upon Aborigines at the hands of white colonists is well documented: Aborigines suffered a progression of different theories concerning their welfare (see especially Rowley 1970). Initially misunderstood, perceived as savages in a hostile land, Aborigines succumbed to diseases introduced by early colonists. There is some suggestion these were introduced deliberately to cull the Aboriginal population. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Aboriginal population had been literally decimated: in Tasmania it was almost completely obliterated, and Aborigines had been removed from their land, forced onto economically marginal land by the allocation of pastoral leases, imprisoned, or removed and segregated by sex on Dorre and Bernier Islands for treatment (punishment) for venereal disease. By the start of the twentieth century, the biologist Spencer announced Aborigines were closer to animals than to humans, and so would naturally die out. To ease their passing, Aboriginal reserves were created: huge tracts of land where Aborigines of full descent could live out the last days of their dying race. By the 1930s it was apparent not only that the Aboriginal population was not going to die 'naturally' as predicted, but that the Aboriginal population was increasing, and through the *Native Administration Act 1936* the White Australia policy was introduced whereby Aboriginal children of mixed descent were removed from their mothers and

placed in the care of white foster parents, or in children's homes. It was calculated that eventually all trace of their Aboriginality would be lost, as unlike Negroes, Aboriginality never produces a 'throw-back' baby (Glowczewski 1998). The policy was clear: segregation of Aborigines of full descent on reserves; assimilation of those of mixed descent into white society. These policies, which continued into the 1960s, halted when Aboriginality became a vital resource for a young nation.[1] In the late 1960s, Aborigines were given citizenship and the vote, equal pay, the right to buy alcohol, and they could contract marriages with whomever they chose. The 1970s saw a period of self-determination for Aborigines, and the institution of Aboriginal agencies. By 1985 the Aboriginal Development Commission was granted a budget with which to purchase land for Aboriginal groups (Glowczewski 1998).

The issue of land had always been contentious. When the first colonists arrived in 1788, Australia, like many colonies, was declared legally to be *terra nullius*: empty land. Aboriginal ownership of the land was not recognised in English legal terms. Dispossession of Aborigines was therefore easy. Parcels of land were granted in the form of pastoral leases, and free settlers grazed cattle and sheep over huge tracts of land. Aborigines, who prior to contact would have foraged on the land, were regarded as trespassers or poachers, and were shot. Eventually many were forced to concede to working on the pastoral stations, where they were fed and could remain together in families. Those able to live on reserves found the land barren, and were forced

[1] It has been argued that in recent years, and talk of Australia becoming a republic, Aboriginality may substitute monarchy (Morton 1996).

to enter the strict regimes of the mission stations through hunger and drought. This is not to say that Aborigines did not resist colonial interference: Reynolds has discussed Aboriginal uses of organised raids, economic warfare through the destruction of stock and crops, vengeance raids, advanced bushcraft and sorcery in their resistance to colonial imposition (1982).

The late 1970s saw the passing of legislation that allowed for the return of unalienated crown land to Aboriginal groups who could prove an association with the land, and legislation to protect Aboriginal sacred sites.[2] Land rights became contentious again in the 1990s, firstly with the Mabo decision in the High Court, which overturned the doctrine of *terra nullius*, then its ratification in the 1993 *Native Title Act*, amended in 1998.[3] Aboriginal groups can now claim compensation for the loss of use of land where traditionally they would have had a spiritual attachment to it. Further, where a traditional right to forage or use resources can be proved, Aboriginal groups may maintain that right, even though a pastoral lease has been granted on that land. The acknowledgement of these rights has caused outrage from some quarters in Australia, the media hysterically declaring that the granting of such rights will result in the loss of people's own back yards. However, whereas Tonkinson (1998) has argued that 'Native Title specifies and therefore legitimises Aboriginal culture in the form of laws and customs' and in so doing reinforces cultural pride and Aboriginal identity, Morton (1998) argues

[2] Rose shows how Aborigines understand land rights legislation as white acknowledgement of injustice, and an attempt to make amends. However, the Land Commissioner deciding the case does not formulate a decision based on past suffering, hence, Aborigines and lawyers come away from land claims hearings with vastly different ideas as to what has happened (Rose 1996).

[3] Attwood points out that Native Title exists only so far as it is recognised in Australian law: it does not stem from Aboriginal law (1996).

that in having to prove the 'traditional connection' with the land, Native Title is most clearly available to those Aborigines who have least been affected by the doctrine of *terra nullius*.

Aboriginality has in the last few years become popular. Appropriated by the practitioners of the New Age who perceive it as sympathetic with the earth and spirituality, and made sexy by actors like Ernie Dingo, rock groups like Yothu Yindi, and athletes like Cathy Freeman; reconciliation is now the new buzzword in Australian politics. It is Aboriginality which makes Australia distinctive, and the recognition of this has led to the presentation of a pan-Aboriginality which Aborigines themselves resist. Tonkinson describes how the notion of a pan-Aboriginality results in the cultural traditions of urban Aborigines being unrecognised, or perceived as 'inauthentic' (1998). Glowczewski argues that though there may be the presentation of a political pan-Aboriginality (especially for Australia preparing for the world stage with the Sydney Olympics in 2000), Aboriginal groups mark their distinctiveness in opposition to each other first, and then define themselves in opposition to non-Aborigines (1998). Morton also addresses the issue of Aboriginality, in a discussion of the approach of Cowlishaw who sees Aboriginality as essentially concerned with resistance. He argues that Aboriginality cannot simply be defined in terms of opposition to white culture, as this approach causes those Aborigines who have jobs in schools, institutions or bureaucracy not to be recognised as such. He quotes Rowse, arguing similarly that a culture of poverty may be interpreted as a culture without interests, content to live off social security payments, and may be highly detrimental to those living within it (Morton 1998).

It is with the image of marginalised, dispossessed people, previously scorned and denigrated yet proving themselves resistant, resilient, politically astute and now in demand to provide a long history for a projected new republic, that I formulated the project which constitutes this thesis. I was concerned to investigate how Aboriginal people engaged with tourism, to see whether their engagement followed the pattern of white exploitation, or whether it was another example of Aboriginal resistance. As a complementary interest, I was interested to ascertain how money made through tourism was distributed. Analyses of Aboriginal distribution of alcohol and social security pensions have suggested that it is distributed as a means to build up credit with others, a form of insurance that may be called upon in the future (Collmann 1988: 99; Layton 1995a), or that it may be distributed along traditional kinship lines (Peterson 1991). Specifically, I was anxious to study the effects of tourism on the Aboriginal population at Uluṟu (Ayers Rock), as it occurred to me that Uluṟu, the site of imposed mass tourism, was a vital icon to both tourists and Australians, and to the Aboriginal people who live there (Aṉangu). I was concerned to ascertain whether mass tourism had resulted in cultural creolisation (and if so, what form it took), or whether Aboriginal culture had managed to encompass this phenomenon, and had attributed its own meanings to it.

Fieldwork methodology

Between September 1996 and September 1998 I conducted fieldwork in Central Australia. After an initial few weeks in Alice Springs, the remainder of my time was spent at the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park in the Northern

Territory, and in the Yulara tourist resort located 13 kms north of Uluṟu (Ayers Rock). Aṉangu live in a closed community (i.e. entry is through permit only) called Muṯitjulu, situated within the National Park. I will explain how I actually conducted my field work by examining how I was perceived by others whilst I lived in Central Australia. Obviously, as time passed, others' perceptions of me, and my perceptions of myself, changed, so that at the end of two years I was fully 'local', and in some contexts, an 'old hand'. As I intrude little in the remainder of this thesis, my methods of data collection are given here in explicit, and often painful detail. I have divided these perceptions of me into three categories, which I have termed *piṟanpa*, *kungka*, and *ninti*.

Being *piṟanpa*

Piṟanpa is the term Aṉangu use for white, or whitefella, and I shall stretch it to encompass foreigner. I shall commence with my initial entry to my chosen field location. Upon arrival at Uluṟu I presented my fieldwork proposal to the Muṯitjulu Community council and asked for permission to do research. At the meeting, I was introduced by Jon Willis, the Community Liaison Officer, another anthropologist who had been living and working in Muṯitjulu for nine years.[4] Aṉangu listened carefully to my proposal, related to them via a

[4]I have not used pseudonyms to conceal the identities of anyone mentioned within this thesis, as anyone who wished to determine the identities of characters mentioned in this thesis would easily be able to do so, nothing I discuss is of a sensitive or restricted nature and much of what I discuss is public knowledge. Though in recent years anthropologists have agonised over how to disguise their field locations and identities of informants, this is inappropriate in this case: Uluṟu is an interesting field location because it is unique. Further, I entered the field declaring myself as an anthropologist, and stating explicitly what my intentions were. Aṉangu and piṟanpa alike understood fully what anthropology entailed, and that I was likely to record details they gave me. As people talked to me in the full understanding of my role, and I report little that should be taken as criticism of their actions, I feel that pseudonyms are unnecessary.

translator, and announced that they were uninterested in the effects of tourism, but they were interested to find out what tourists thought of them. Particularly, they had designed and built a Cultural Centre within the Park a year previously, and wanted to know how effective it was in putting across messages to tourists, and what tourists thought of the Cultural Centre generally. The discussion progressed promisingly, until Jim Glover, the Chief Executive Officer, said, "So, Kim can do her fieldwork? Yes?"

"*Wiya.*"

I had only been in the field for a couple of days but even I knew that *wiya* meant no. I did not understand why they were refusing, as they had all seemed so interested in my project. The reason soon became apparent.

Willis sprang up and berated Anangu for pigheadedness. He argued that I was offering to do a useful study for them, for free, that if they had to pay someone it would cost thousands of dollars. He grew angrier and angrier, and a furious argument sprang up. An Anangu woman, Mantatjara, screamed at him that they did not like anthropologists, they did not want any more interference. At that Jon left the room. The room was silent for some time and we all stared at the floor. Finally Jim Glover coughed and said, "So, can we speak nicely to Kim, now? It's not her fault."

Mantatjara apologised, said she had to let out her feelings, and Willis was annoying her. Jim Glover pounced, and asked again if I could do my fieldwork, as they had only said no to annoy Willis. The Community agreed to let me commence my research, on condition I study the tourists first; on

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I should also add that a plain English version of this thesis will be sent to the Mutitjulu Community, the Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park, and the Ayers Rock Resort.

reporting back they would review the situation. They were also not keen for me to live permanently in Mutitjulu.

On the basis of this tentative agreement, I devised some questionnaires and interview structures, and sat at the base of the climb and within the Cultural Centre, compiling some quantitative data that I could present to Anangu. Though I had not anticipated conducting interviews or completing questionnaires before I left for the field, it was highly beneficial. Firstly, Anangu could see me doing what they had asked me to do, and the very thing they were unwilling to do themselves: talk to the tourists. Secondly, for the whitefellas I met, participant observation fieldwork seemed suspiciously like lounging around, but they could see me early each morning with my clipboard and pencils, seemingly with a legitimate role. Psychologically, the initial dislocating and insecure weeks of fieldwork were necessarily structured and purposeful. My days had an order to them: interviewing in the mornings, then analysing the data or going out on conducted tours in the afternoons. Though I have used little of the data I collected then in my writing, at the time the growing pile of completed sheets was comforting. Also, I was able to barter the data I collected regarding length of stay, hotel occupancy, and place previously visited etc., in return for assistance from the National Park and the Yulara resort. My data was also useful when the Park conducted a safety audit, and wished to formulate a new visitor management strategy.

After a few months, I put in a formal request to present my findings regarding tourist appreciation of the Cultural Centre. Word came back that I should report for the next meeting, and that Anangu were looking forward to seeing me. Jim Glover explained, "I asked them if you could come, and they

all started smiling and grinning, remembering what it was like at the last meeting when Mantatjara and Willis had a fight. Mantatjara said, 'Poor Kim, she was so upset' and they all had a good laugh." The joke was relived at the meeting, and we all grinned at each other. I presented my findings on the Cultural Centre, and asked if I could continue with my work. They replied, "Of course, this is good! We're used to seeing you around now."

And indeed they were, because I had helped to sort out two years of filing that had cluttered the community offices, and while I was in there working away, Anangu came in and talked, and asked for money, lifts and petrol. At the time I had a distinctive orange Cortina, and they used to look out for it, checking up on what I was doing and where I was going. When one of the Anangu men fell in love with me, they called me "Rupert's *kungka* (girl), orange car woman", and kept him informed of my whereabouts.

This is not to say that relations with the Mutitjulu community stayed friendly. After nine months of fieldwork, I asked for a formal letter approving of my fieldwork, as I had received verbal permission from both the Mutitjulu community and from the National Park. My request was taken to the Board of Management, which makes the major decisions concerning the Park, and where Anangu hold the majority vote. The Board refused to give me a formal letter, citing as a reason, "You were friends with Jon Willis, and we don't like him anymore." This was a tricky situation: the Community and Park are represented by the Board, but the Board had made this outrageous statement. Individual Anangu considered my research to be valuable, and the Park was depending on the results for various projects, yet personal politics threatened the entire project. Interestingly, if the Board had merely said they no longer

felt able to support anthropological investigations, I would have accepted their explanation, but I felt their reason was unacceptable. As the Board had not deigned to present its objections to me in the form of a letter or even verbally in person (my request was put before the Board by the new Community Liaison Officer after Jon Willis left the post), I decided to ignore the message I had received. However, it was not without much anthropological soul searching, and a thorough questioning of anthropological ethics. I decided to live in Yulara, and continue my research from there. I had several Aṉangu friends, and as my research was concerned with tourism, it was not necessary to live full-time in Muṯitjulu, though I did occasionally perform house and dog sitting services there for people away on holiday. The situation, though infuriating at the time, has resulted in this holistic study of the entire situation at Uluṟu, encompassing Aṉangu, tourists, and the white Park rangers and Yulara resort workers. I trained and worked as a tour guide: a useful way of ascertaining what tourists think about the area, and particularly Aṉangu, by examining the questions they asked me concerning Aṉangu, and also a poignant way of experiencing the lives of Yulara workers.

Being *kungka*

Kungka means girl, a woman who has fewer than two children. It also has the secondary meaning of girlfriend, and I soon experienced a paranoia of meaning over this. The situation for Park staff and Yulara employees regarding romantic partners is problematic. Many Park staff have permanent partners, and the total number of staff is small. In the Yulara resort, staff typically do not stay long: eight months is the norm. Consequently, the pool of

available partners is small and constantly changing, so those looking for a long-term attachment are restricted in their choice of partners. The problem is further exacerbated by the disdain that Park staff feel for Yulara workers. Thus, unattached people are at a premium. My *kungka* possibilities were apprehended quickly by a number of people.

Firstly, I fell into the clutches of Rupert, a senior Aboriginal man, famous for his loquacity and cowboy hat. He is known as the 'cowboy ranger'. He is also famously unsuccessful in finding a partner.[5] He is constantly on the lookout for a likely white woman, and he showers his affections on every new arrival. He commences his seduction techniques by being very friendly, anxious to talk to improve his English, and keen to have his photograph taken with the girl in question. As most Anangu are shy and wary of strangers, the target *kungka* is overwhelmed and flattered by this attention, especially when Rupert then demands dinner dates, telephone calls and lifts. As a new anthropologist, it was too good to be true. Rupert then announces that the girl in question is his *kungka*, and she naively thinks he is saying that she is a young girl. Rupert increases the pressure, having fits of jealousy if the *kungka* talks to anyone else, and he then says pointedly that he does not have a wife. The *kungka* becomes alarmed and back-pedals furiously, leaving Rupert with a broken heart and another photograph to put in his '*kungka* album'. His antics are a source of amusement to all who are not regarded as *kungka*, and Anangu describe him as '*kungka rama*' (girl crazy).

[5]Towards the end of my fieldwork, Rupert achieved his dream and married a woman working in the community of Ernabella.

My *kungka* potential was also recognised by the Park manager, Julian Barry. He had a vested interest in the romantic fulfilment of his employees, as accommodation for Park staff is sometimes squeezed and if he can persuade staff to form long-term relationships, i.e. live together, the pressure on housing is eased. When I arrived in the field, he quickly drew up a list of unattached men that he wanted to lose responsibility for, and actively started matchmaking by asking these people to take spurious messages to me. It was through these machinations that I developed an understanding of the separate white communities between Park rangers and Yulara locals.

As an anthropologist who is a woman, I found that other women confided in me and quickly adopted me as a friend. They took me out with them when they worked, and introduced me to many people. They realised I knew nothing about the landscape: that when I looked out I effectively saw a blank plain, so they started to teach me the plants, trees, birds, animals and habitats. I was widely used as an agony aunt by both men and women, *piṟanpa* and Aṉangu. Many of the problems that were expressed to me concerned the problems with living in such a remote location, jobs, romantic partners, attitudes towards Aṉangu and tourists, or towards whitefellas and tourists.

Being *ninti*

Ninti means experienced, knowledgeable, having understanding. My process of becoming *ninti* started with Rupert. He had been hospitalised for treatment of boils, and when I next saw him I gave him a picturesque photograph of a waterfall in Scotland, explaining that this was 'my country'. He studied it carefully for a while then asked, "Is there water all the time?"

"Of course there is!"

"Then this is good country. You could live here."

That simple pronouncement changed the way I viewed the landscape and added one more piece to the enigma which was Anangu lives: the beauty of a place was unimportant, what mattered was water, the availability of resources, a spiritual link.

As part of becoming local, and *ninti*, I worked as a tour guide, and eventually I trained other tour guides. I learned basic Pitjantjatjara, tracking, the medicinal properties of various plants, I acquired a huge knowledge of local species, geology and history. Sometimes I was taught by Anangu, at others I learned from experienced whites: environmentalists, conservationists and rangers. Though I commenced like a child, knowing nothing, having to be taught the most basic things, how to treat bites and stings, how to pee in the bush, warned to avoid sunburn; eventually I had knowledge.

The way in which one becomes *ninti* is rarely touched upon in the anthropological literature (though see Biddle 1993), and that is through one's body. Although I acquired knowledge through participant observation fieldwork, asking questions and reading, my understanding of what it is to be a tourist, Anangu and a Yulara local came through my body.

At first, my body was like a tourist's: I was too hot and the sweat trickled uncomfortably down the backs of my legs. I was bothered by the thousands of flies, and anxious about poisonous snakes, spiders and scorpions. I did not drink enough water, and often felt dizzy and headachy. I forgot to reapply sunscreen, and got sunburn. I had the wrong clothes, I ate new foods, some of which were quite revolting. I drank beer for the first time. My

eyesight went haywire, and Rupert tactfully explained to me that it was because I was a whitefella and my eyes were not yet used to the strong light, but after a couple of weeks my eyes would be accustomed to the light and my sight would no longer be blurry. I was very aware of the distinctive smell of Central Australia: acacia blossoms, barbecued meat, hot skin, rain on scorched earth, mulga smoke, and the people themselves.

Fortunately, after a short time my body became more like a white local's. As a tour guide, I arose at 3.30 am in order to guide tourists around Uluṟu. I slept in the middle of the day, ate at odd times, socialised at odd times. I was tired, often exhausted, and learned how to operate on automatic pilot to put on a good show for the tourists yet conserving my energy. I learned to drink vast amounts of water prior to, and after going on a tour so that I never needed to pass water, but equally I did not suffer from heat stress. I copied others in freezing water bottles, so even on a long tour I still had cool water to sip, rather than water the temperature of blood. My specific job as a guide was the 9.5 km walk around the base of Uluṟu. The first part is incredibly windy, the last unbearably hot. The alternating cold wind, sand sprays and burning sun guarantee a cold sore at the end of the tour, and a good indication of who has been conducting the extended interpretative walks are the brown iodine patches around the mouths of locals. Thus I learned what it was to be like a Yulara local, through what happened to my body.

Regarding Aṉangu, I was shocked. Three months before I left Australia I became ill with what at first seemed to be a bad flu. I did not recover, and I was subjected to numerous blood and medical tests to try to ascertain what I had contracted. Upon finding out I was an anthropologist,

who had contact with Aboriginal people, I was then tested for tuberculosis. What to me was a Third World disease was a fact of life for Anangu, and the consultants I saw were alarmingly casual about the disease. Biddle (1993) herself argues that illness, and possibly injury, are to be expected during fieldwork, as the body is forced to accommodate a wholly new situation, and sickness is the appropriate bodily reaction. Illness can then be seen not only as likely, but desirable, as proof of immersion in an alien culture. Like her, I call for this to be made more explicit in anthropological writing, and in preparing new fieldworkers.

Outline of the thesis

The way in which I personally became *ninti* is reflected to a certain extent in the organisation of the following chapters.[6] Chapter two offers an introduction and detailed background to the area, its history, and the development of tourism in the region. The people inhabiting this area are identified and contextualised. The following chapter analyses the landscape from the point of view of Anangu, and how they have obligations towards it that were laid down by the ancestors during what they term the *Tjukurpa* (known as the Dreaming in other parts of Australia). This obligation towards the land and the ancestors is taken up and developed in chapter three and demonstrates how Anangu use their perceptions of the land to articulate the difference between themselves and tourists. A major point of conflict between tourists and Anangu is the Uluru climb. For the majority of tourists, attempting the long, steep, strenuous ascent of Uluru is a lifetime's ambition. It is also the focus for much of the

tourist advertising of Uluṟu. However, for Aṉangu, the site of the climb is a sacred pathway, and they object to the many thousands of people streaming up the steep side of Uluṟu each year. Chapter four discusses the changing ways in which Aṉangu have articulated their opposition to the climb, demonstrating the way in which they use aspects of the *Tjukurpa* and their place as rightful owners of the land to assert messages about their culture to tourists. Chapter five examines the tourist response to Uluṟu and Aṉangu, and offers an analysis of Aboriginal involvement in tourism. Having identified the different groups of whitefellas in the area, chapter six gives an ethnography of the communities that comprise the rangers and the Yulara locals, and examines the ways in which they engage with Aṉangu culture. Aṉangu assertion of themselves and their role in the landscape, and tourists' experiences within the landscape are juxtaposed and analysed in the final chapter, where theories drawn from phenomenology and embodiment are used to explore this disjunction.

[6]All chapter titles in the body of the thesis are taken from actual signs found within the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park.

Chapter Two: *Pukulpa pitjama Ananguku ngurakutu*[1]

"Now we've got this rock back, I've sent all my brothers and cousins to pack it up in suitcases and take it away." Yami Lester, October 26th, 1985, at Handback of Uluru to the traditional owners.

From a flat, scrubby desert plain dotted with mulga, desert oaks and spinifex rise two huge red rock inselbergs: Uluru and Kata Tjuta. 348 metres in height and 9.5 kilometres in circumference, the sandstone hulk of Uluru is accentuated by its rising at an angle of 80 degrees to the plain. Fifty kilometres to the west, the conglomerate domes of Kata Tjuta cover an area of 42 square kilometres. These massive rock formations are situated in central Australia, in the Northern Territory, close to its borders with Western Australia and South Australia. The nearest town of any size is Alice Springs, 450 kilometres away by road. To whitefellas, Uluru and Kata Tjuta were formed by unique geological processes that started over 900 million years ago, but to Western Desert Aborigines they are reminders of the ancestors who travelled there during the *Tjukurpa*, the Dreaming. Archaeological remains found in sand dunes close to the area suggest that the local Aborigines, Anangu, have been present for 30,000 years pursuing a hunter-gatherer way of life throughout (Layton and Titchen 1995). The languages spoken in the area are Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara.[2] In both of these languages, the word for 'person' is 'Anangu', and this is the term the local Aborigines have adopted to describe

[1]Welcome to Aboriginal land: sign that greets visitors as they enter Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park.

themselves. To Anangu, Uluru is a cluster of sacred sites, the cross-roads of a number of *Tjukurpa* tracks. The thirty-six domes that comprise Kata Tjuta ('Many heads') conceal a number of important initiation sites. In December and January each year, the men go to Kata Tjuta to perform ceremonies, and the area is out of bounds to women. As Biernoff (1982) points out for other areas in Australia, Anangu have a responsibility to protect their land and sacred sites. Failure to do so may result in spearing.

This introduction to the area will outline the history of the region, and then go on to identify four groups of people in the area who are involved in tourism: Anangu, Yulara locals, Park rangers and the tourists themselves. These groups face antagonism and opposition between each other and from outside agencies like the Northern Territory government and interstate tour operators. It will be shown that the situation is one of competing interests, historical antagonisms, and deep-seated resentments.

The first Europeans to sight Uluru and Kata Tjuta were the explorers W.C. Gosse and E. Giles in the 1870s. Gosse named Uluru 'Ayers Rock' after the premier of South Australia at the time, Sir Henry Ayers. Giles, as the first European to sight Kata Tjuta, had the privilege of naming it after Queen Olga of Wurtenberg. Giles' sponsor was the botanist Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, who came from Wurtenberg, and so Kata Tjuta became 'The Olgas'. The name Mount Olga persists for the largest of the domes. After the initial discoveries, there were a number of expeditions to the area to assess the viability of pastoralism (Tietkins in 1889, Day in 1916), to examine the natural

[2]Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara are part of the Western Desert group of languages extending over a huge area of central Australia, South Australia and into Western Australia. Speakers of these languages are known as Anangu.

species (Horn Expedition in 1894), to prospect for gold (Lasseter in 1930) and to record Aboriginal culture (Spencer and Gillen as part of the Horn expedition in 1894, Tindale in the 1920s, Basedow in 1926, Mountford in 1935, 1940 and 1953) (Hill 1994, Mountford 1977, C. Williams pers. comm.).

In 1911, the Australian government established Aboriginal reserves: swathes of economically useless land in remote regions where Aborigines could be segregated from whites and managed more effectively (Rowley 1970: 250; Gumbert 1984: 17). As Butlin writes, 'A very ancient society was largely rolled away by a very youthful one, and with substantial indifference' (1993: 227f). Under this policy, the South West Aboriginal Reserve was created in 1920, encompassing Uluṟu and Kata Tjuṯa (ANPWS 1991). Tourism to the area increased during the late 1940s and 50s, and in 1958 an area totalling 1325 square kilometres surrounding Uluṟu and Kata Tjuṯa was excised from the reserve and declared a national park, to be managed by the Northern Territory Reserves Board (ANPWS 1991). In 1977 this area came under Commonwealth jurisdiction, but was managed by the Northern Territory Conservation Commission, and was renamed the Uluru (Ayers Rock - Mount Olga) National Park (ANPWS 1991)[3].

In 1976, the passing of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* gave Aboriginal people the entitlement to claim areas of unalienated Crown land. Traditional Aboriginal ownership is defined by section 3 of the Act as a 'local descent group of Aboriginals who - a) have common spiritual affiliations to a site on the land, being affiliations that place

[3]I am using the contemporary orthography for the name of the Park, hence 'Uluru' not 'Uluṟu'. (Underlining indicates a retroflex.) Pitjantjatjara orthography was standardised in 1979, hence the discrepancy in orthography (Eckert and Hudson 1988).

the group under a primary spiritual responsibility for that site and for the land; and b) are entitled by Aboriginal tradition to forage as of right over that land' (quoted in Neate 1989: 42). Gumbert (1984) has argued that the Act is flawed, as it was formulated using Radcliffe-Brownian structural-functional models of Aboriginal societies, devised by anthropologists working in the 1930s and 40s, when Aboriginal society had been decimated by disease and genocide (Butlin 1993), and those remaining had been forcibly removed to reserve lands. He argues that such models were too simple, and failed to recognise the many cross-cutting ties of kinship and inherent flexibility in rights and obligations to land. However, flawed as it is, the Act potentially gave Aborigines claim to 42% of the entire area of the Northern Territory (Gumbert 1984: 41).[4]

Under the Act, in 1978, despite strong white opposition, a section of Kakadu National Park in the Top End of the Northern Territory was returned to its Aboriginal owners, with the proviso it be leased back to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS : a Commonwealth institution) for one hundred years (Alanen 1992). Inspired by this, a claim was lodged in December 1978 for an area that included the Uluru National Park. Mr. Justice Toohey, the Aboriginal Land Commissioner, disallowed this portion of the claim, asserting that it was not 'unalienated Crown land' (Gumbert 1984:136). However, with the return of a Labour government in 1983, and a surge in interest in Aboriginal rights generally, on 26th October 1985, the Uluru National Park was returned to its traditional owners, on condition the land be leased to the ANPWS for 99 years. Those identified as traditional owners

[4]Further analysis of land holding will be given in chapter three.

were Anangu who could demonstrate a spiritual association with Uluru and Kata Tjuta.[5]

There was considerable opposition to the handback of the land. As title to the area was handed over, a plane flew overhead trailing a banner which read 'Ayers Rock is for ALL Australians'. Prior to the handback a film crew had filmed Anangu asleep in swags or living in humpies, the obvious message being that they could not be trusted to manage Australia's most famous icon. The Chief Minister of the Northern Territory at the time, Paul Everingham, declared that the return of Uluru to Anangu meant that it was 'lost' to all other Australians. A $300,000 publicity campaign opposing the handback was carried out in the weeks leading up to handback (Rowse 1995). Marcus (1988) explains this opposition by describing how in the 1980s Australia was in search of a national identity and a history. This became focused on a 'settler ideology' that espoused closeness to the land, a pioneering spirit, and an ability to cope with the harsh environment of the Centre. Ayers Rock was appropriated as a symbol of 'authentic bush values': egalitarianism and masculinity. Everingham himself talked of 'pioneering people taming a harsh environment' and said Uluru was symbolic of this (Whittaker 1994). It is ironic that in appropriating Uluru as a symbol of 'Australian-ness' it has effectively denied the rights of Aborigines to assert exclusive ownership over their land, as others have claimed a spiritual affinity with Uluru for themselves. Thus, 'racism has been produced through a doctrine of egalitarianism' (Marcus 1988).

[5]The term Anangu refers merely to Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people, who number approximately 5000, and is not synonymous with the term 'traditional owner'.

Gibson (1994) argues that the Northern Territory government's opposition to the handback was essentially an opposition to Commonwealth and Aboriginal control of potentially 42% of the entire area of the Northern Territory. She writes that the Rock provided a 'populist rallying point' for an issue that was not simply about land but ideology. Conflict between the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth has persisted. In 1993, the name of the Park was changed to the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park, to reflect its Aboriginal ownership. Yami Lester, the chairman of the Board of Management for the Park, said the name change 'sent a clear message about Aboriginal ownership of the parkland and a sense of place in the largely cultural landscape of Uluṟu' (quoted in MacKinolty 1993). The Northern Territory Place Names Committee said the name could not be changed, and that on road signs the area would remain as 'Ayers Rock'. Similarly, the Aṉangu name for the tourist village was changed by the Northern Territory government in 1992 from 'Yulara Corporation' to the 'Ayers Rock Resort', despite opposition from Aṉangu (MacKinolty 1993). Wells (1993) has pointed out the competing interests of the Northern Territory government which markets the National Park, and the Commonwealth which manages it. Thus the Northern Territory attracts tourists to the area by marketing Uluṟu, and many Northern Territory politicians believe it would be better if the Territory also managed the Park which is its greatest tourist attraction, rather than being operated by the Commonwealth Parks Service.

Images of Uluṟu and Kata Tjuṯa have been appropriated for use in numerous advertising campaigns from airlines to hamburgers (Brereton 1994), despite stringent rules on commercial photography. In 1992 the Park became

the scene of an ugly confrontation between white and Aboriginal interests. The annual Variety Club Bash, a car race to raise money for charity wanted to parade the vehicles around Uluṟu. Permission to do this was denied, but despite this the Variety members tried to gain access to the Park. Eventually the jam of cars at the entrance to the Park was such that they were allowed into the Park, but the incident and media reportage showed that the rights of tourists and charities took priority over the rights and sensitivities of Aboriginal people (Haines n.d.), and once again Uluṟu was the site of a confrontation between differing agendas.

Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park

When the land comprising the National Park was returned to Aṉangu in 1985, there were several provisions written into the lease with the ANPWS[6]. Firstly, under the terms of the lease, Aṉangu receive an annual rental, currently $100,000, though at handback it was $75,000; and they receive 25% of the money received from the sale of Park entry tickets. Five percent is spent on projects within Muṯitjulu, the local Aboriginal community situated within the Park. The remaining 20% is divided amongst those who have been identified as the traditional owners. Some traditional owners live in Muṯitjulu, others live in more distant communities, but have been identified as traditional owners on the basis of proven spiritual links and responsibilities for the land.[7] The division of the money is handled by the Central Land Council, the body

[6]At the time of the lease, the agency managing the Park was the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS). However, since then it has undergone two name changes, firstly to the Australian Nature Conservation Agency (ANCA), and then to Parks Australia North (PAN). As it was known as PAN for the majority of my fieldwork, that is the name I shall use, unless referring to a specific time.

appointed to co-ordinate the operation of the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa Land Trust which holds title to the land on behalf of all the traditional owners. (Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (N.T.) Act 1976* title is vested in corporations, not in individuals.).

The lease also set up a Board of Management to oversee the running of the Park, and to take all the major decisions concerning it. The Board has ten members, six of whom are Aṉangu or their elected representatives. The remaining four members are: a representative of the Federal Minister for Tourism, a representative of the Federal Minister for the Environment, a scientist expert in arid zone ecology, and the Director of the ANPWS (Wells 1993). Shortly before I left the area, an eleventh member was voted onto the board: Grant Hunt, the managing director of the Ayers Rock Resort Company. Currently, the Chairperson of the Board is Joanne Willmott, an Aṉangu representative from Queensland, who is militant in her attitude to obtain equality for Aṉangu.

The Park's operations are directed by a Plan of Management. The third Plan was in force from January 1991 to the end of December 1997 (ANPWS 1991). A new Plan of Management was due to be submitted to Parliament by September 1997, for ratification, then to come into force on 1st January 1998. Recognising the increasing numbers of tourists visiting the Park (expected to top 500,000 by the year 2000), the Board of Management commissioned a Visitor Management Strategy, whose recommendations would feed into the new Plan of Management. The Visitor Management Strategy (VMS) consultants first visited the area in March 1997, and had produced an interim

[7]See later in this chapter for a discussion of the composition of Muṯitjulu Community.

report by August 1997. However, the Board rejected the interim report and cancelled the VMS, saying that Park rangers would write both the new tourism strategy and the new Plan of Management. At the time of leaving the field (September 1998), neither had been completed, and the Plan of Management was seriously overdue. Unfortunately, the VMS had been funded not only by the Park, but also by the Northern Territory Tourism Commission, and the Ayers Rock Resort. Neither party was consulted before the VMS was cancelled, and all parties lost money, resulting in considerable antagonism among already fragile relationships.

The three stated concerns of the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park are tourism, ecology and Aṉangu culture. In accordance with the last, the driving principle of the Park is *Tjukurpa*: Aṉangu law which determines, amongst other things, land management and use (ANPWS 1991). To facilitate this, a number of Aṉangu work within the Park as rangers or consultants, teaching white rangers traditional ways of maintaining the land, indigenous taxonomies, local habitats, and local species' life histories. In fact, the motto of the Park is *Tjunguringkula waakaripai:* working together. As Tony Tjamiwa, a senior Aṉangu man says, 'We work strong together with the *Tjukurpa* in front ... We're all working to keep the Law strong and to look after this place, Rangers and Aṉangu working together, keeping the Law straight' (Tjamiwa 1991).[8]

Several of the senior Aṉangu have been involved in a long-term survey of the flora and fauna of the area. One of the traditional land management

[8]Several other Northern Territory national parks are jointly managed by Aboriginal people and white rangers including Kakadu (jointly managed with PAN), and Gurig (with the CCNT).

practices is patch burning the country to rid it of old spinifex grass. This allows new growth to come through, and with it, animals come into the area to feed and make burrows. It has been found that mammals and lizards are deterred by spinifex that is older than twenty years as the roots are too matted to make burrows. Burning the land is also essential in the propagation of many acacias, as the heat of the flames is necessary to crack the hard seed pod. Anangu decide when an area of land is ready to be burnt, calling it 'rubbish country', i.e. when the spinifex is very old and starting to form distinctive doughnut shapes as all the nutrients in the soil are exhausted and the plant spreads outwards in search of more fertile soil. Patch burning is performed in the cooler winter months, when there is less danger of sparks setting light to nearby patches of country. This method of patch burning also helps to reduce the devastation caused by wild bush fires, common in the hot, dry summer months: the already burned patches act as fire breaks.

Tjukurpa also decrees that the sacred sites be fenced off to the public, and signs erected warning people not to enter or photograph the sites. As the ring road circling Uluru passes close to *Pulari*, a female sacred site, it is expected that the new Plan of Management will encompass a decree to re-site the road further away from *Pulari*. There are also expectations to re-route the walking track around the rock, again to avoid certain sacred sites; and to improve interpretative signs at Kata Tjuta. Until now, Anangu have had little control over the behaviour of tourists: the first fence was erected round a sacred site in 1974 but tourist disregard of both fences and signs is still of

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Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park has been heralded as a model for joint management (Altman 1989).

concern to Anangu today (Alanen 1992). As part of Anangu's desire that tourists should learn about their culture, the Park set up a series of free ranger-led walks: the Kuniya, Liru and Mala walks, where rangers explain the guiding principle of *Tjukurpa* within the Park. In 1992 the Park devised a three-day workshop for tour operators to learn about Park management practice and the principle of *Tjukurpa*. This workshop is held twice a year, and attendance is optional, though there are plans to make operating licences within the Park dependent on successfully completing the course. Further, all signs within the Park are written in both English and Pitjantjatjara.

The National Park is unusual in that it is one of only nineteen places in the world to have two World Heritage listings. Its first inscription on the World Heritage List, in 1987, was for what the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) considered as Uluru's outstanding natural heritage, its unique and on-going geological processes, the presence of endangered species, and the fact that it is an area of outstanding natural beauty. The National Park was re-inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994, as a significant cultural landscape (Layton and Titchen 1995). In the next chapter I will pursue the apparent contradiction here, that *Tjukurpa* negates geology, and yet the Park has World Heritage listings for both.

At the time of handback, it was mooted that the Park should build an Aboriginal cultural centre to teach tourists about Anangu. Plans for the Cultural Centre were written into the 1991 Plan of Management, and the Cultural Centre was opened in October 1995 as part of the celebrations to commemorate ten years of handback of the land to Anangu. The Cultural Centre was designed and built by Anangu themselves. At the same time,

Anangu started their own tour company, Anangu Tours, which took over two of the free ranger-led walks: the Liru Walk and the Kuniya Walk, making them into a commercial venture.

Mutitjulu Community

Anangu are Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people. Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara are languages from the Western Desert group, and are said actually to be 'sister dialects' (Eckert and Hudson 1988). Anangu with Pitjantjatjara as their first language dispute this, saying Pitjantjatjara is the 'language' and all the others are merely dialects of it. 'Anangu' is a Pitjantjatjara word meaning simply 'people'. In interactions with whitefellas, it is often written *Anangu maru* (black people) to denote Aboriginal people; whitefellas are inscribed as *Anangu piranpa*. The classification of Aboriginal 'tribes' according to dialect or language is a feature of European anthropology (Berndt 1976). My Pitjantjatjara teacher, Lorna Wilson, explained that until whitefellas used languages as a means of distinguishing people, Anangu simply referred to themselves as 'people of the West' (i.e. all Western Desert speakers), but whitefella classification came to be adopted by Anangu themselves.

Approximately 180 Anangu live within the National Park, in the Mutitjulu community.[9] Not all community members are traditional owners, and not all of the traditional owners live in Mutitjulu. A number live in more distant communities. However, the community population is not static: there is

[9]Throughout Australia, the term 'community' is used to designate an Aboriginal village, and may refer to the physical location (e.g. "The community is overrun with dogs") or to the inhabitants (e.g. "The community is in 'sorry time' right now").

considerable movement of Anangu into and out of the community for ceremonial obligations, to visit kin in other communities, to go to homelands (remote areas where there is a traditional connection), to attend football matches, or because periodically Mutitjulu breaks out in inter-family warfare, and those not directly involved desert the community. The housing stock is inadequate, though each Plan of Management for the National Park seeks to redress this. When the Cultural Centre was being built, Anangu learned how to make mud bricks, and these skills were utilised to build a few more houses within the community. In 1998, though, it was decided at a community council meeting not to build any more mud brick buildings as children could tunnel easily through the walls into the clinic to steal medicines; and 'the walls disintegrate if you pee on them'!

The community boasts a petrol station, store, community offices, primary school, college for adult education, clinic and church. There is also a warehouse for Maruku arts and crafts,[10] an Aboriginal owned company that buys arts and crafts from a number of remote Aboriginal communities and wholesales them to various outlets, ensuring the artists receive a fair price for their work. There is a beleaguered women's centre where a number of craftswomen make high quality ceramics in a building known as 'the straw house'. The women's centre has had a chequered history: periodically the funding for it has been cut, and its future is uncertain.

The white rangers and community workers also live within Mutitjulu. There is a marked division of space within the community. Community workers live in housing that is close to the hub of Aboriginal life: this area is

sarcastically known as 'Mutitjulu Heights'. The white ranger staff live in housing that is separated from the rest of the community by a sand dune. Their part of Mutitjulu is referred to as 'Rangerville', and is home to the children's playground and tennis courts. There is no swimming pool in Mutitjulu (though see chapter six in this thesis), and Anangu children have a tendency to swim in the sewage lake. Mutitjulu is unusual in that it is funded by Parks Australia North (PAN) instead of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). PAN sees that gate receipts for people entering the National Park are high, and so assumes, wrongly, that Anangu are wealthy, and so do not need extra funding. Consequently the community is underfunded: the housing stock is inadequate and it is the only Aboriginal community without street lighting.

Mutitjulu has an interesting history. In 1958 the Welfare Branch of the Northern Territory government tried to remove Anangu from camps around Uluru, as tourist numbers were increasing and it was felt that Aborigines should not be seen. Anangu were moved to missions at Areyonga (near Alice Springs) and Ernabella (in South Australia) (Altman 1987; 1988). Later, Anangu were also removed to the new community at Docker River on the Western Australia border, built 1967-8. This was not a mission settlement, but was built for the purposes of social welfare and control. Interestingly, Anangu perceived the provision of Docker River as an attempt by the government to return them to 'their country' because it is situated on land that they had traditionally occupied, and rights of permanent residence there were hotly contested on the basis of pre-settlement tradition. Those wishing to live there

[10]Maruku means 'belonging to the black people'.

permanently had to prove a traditional association with the land (Woenne 1977). The Docker River Social Club, Walpanya Trading Co., opened the Ininti general store at Uluṟu in July 1972, and in August of the same year opened a petrol station there. The establishment of these enterprises provided an excuse for Aṉangu to return to Uluṟu, and by 1974 there was a permanent camp there. The community became incorporated as Muṯitjulu Community Inc. in 1978, and housing was provided by ANPWS (Altman 1987). In 1975 Malpa Trading Co. took over Walpanya, and from 1974 to 1984 Malpa successfully provided services for both tourists and Aṉangu (Altman 1988).

Until the early 1980s, tourist accommodation was situated close to the Muṯitjulu community, at the eastern side of the Rock. There was even an airstrip alongside the northern face of Uluṟu. However, it was decided that the dramatically increasing numbers of tourists were causing erosion problems, so a purpose built tourist village was planned. This was built on land along the northern boundary of the Park, and opened fully in 1984. Malpa Trading Co. had facilitated the building of the resort by providing fuel, and so put in a bid to operate the petrol station in the resort, but were unsuccessful. Malpa also tendered to run the supermarket and an arts and crafts shop in the resort, but withdrew their bid when accountants calculated that profitability would be marginal (Altman 1987). Aṉangu were not consulted in the development of the resort, and once built there were no plans for training and employing Aṉangu within it. Further, because Malpa no longer had the monopoly on petrol, food and gift supplies, it suffered a dramatic drop in profits (Altman 1988).

The resort was built by the Northern Territory government, and because the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory (CCNT) believed that Aborigines should not live in National Parks, they spent $1 million on constructing ten houses, a community centre and a craft shelter in order to move Anangu out of the Park. It has been argued that the provision of the housing was less to do with conservation and philanthropy and more to do with having a human zoo. Viewing platforms constructed on the top of sand-dunes looked directly into the Aboriginal community (Rowse 1992). Anangu voted with their feet, and refused to move. Tourists could still enter the Mutitjulu community to purchase petrol, food and souvenirs, but as tourism became more intrusive, it was decided to close the community to tourists (Bogle 1988). In 1986, Mutitjulu became accessible by permit only.

Yulara

As described above, the resort was purpose built in 1984, costing the Northern Territory government $200 million (Wells 1993). Initially it was named Yulara, a Pitjantjatjara place name for the area meaning 'dingo howl'. This name was agreed in consultation with Anangu. However, the name was changed in 1992 to the Ayers Rock Resort (MacKinolty 1993)[11]. In defiance of this decree from the Northern Territory government, all signs within the National Park say 'Yulara' not 'Ayers Rock Resort'. Until recently, the resort

[11]The geographical area was still known as Yulara. Technically the township of Yulara was more than simply the resort. The resort was formally described as 'the Ayers Rock Resort at Yulara', but tourist brochures were changed from 'Yulara Corporation' to 'Ayers Rock Resort'. These changes had far reaching ramifications, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

retaliated by putting up signs to 'Ayers Rock and the Olgas' instead of 'Uluṟu and Kata Tjuṯa'.

Yulara has five hotels and a campground for tourists. The accommodation is expensive, which probably accounts for the average tourist stay of only 1.6 nights. There is an airport, supermarket, bakery, petrol station, Post Office, newsagency, photography shop, various fast food outlets and souvenir shops, and a number of overpriced cafes and restaurants. One bar operates a take away liquor outlet. The resort consists of low level buildings: none is taller than the sand dunes, and the resort has been designed to blend into the environment as far as possible. Though there are landscaped gardens in the resort, and various paths across the sand dunes, once beyond the resort buildings you are in unadulterated desert. The resort management is proud of its luxury accommodation, and runs advertisements saying how 'being in the desert is not like being in the desert' (Ayers Rock Resort Company). At one point they even advertised that there was so much to do within the resort, with its swimming pools, restaurants and bars, that tourists had no need to go into the National Park for entertainment, but could simply look at Uluṟu through their hotel windows! The resort offers scenic flights, camel rides, a visitor centre, an Aboriginal dance company and an observatory for tourists.

Yulara has room for 5000 visitors a night, and when the permanent staff are added to this figure it becomes the fourth largest town in the Northern Territory. Staff interests are catered for by a residents' club, gymnasium, several small swimming pools and barbecue facilities. There are a number of sports clubs, a darts team, a library, a medical centre and a college where people can take a range of courses including languages and business studies.

Children of resort staff are catered for by a nursery and primary school. The number of staff is around a thousand and increasing, but even so the resort is understaffed.

The housing situation is unusual in that the housing stock is owned by the Northern Territory Housing Commission, yet administered by the resort. Housing provision for staff is inadequate, expensive and bizarrely allocated. Allocation is based on employment position and duration in Yulara. This will be discussed further in chapter six. Accommodation is also provided for the doctors from the medical centre, who work in Yulara on a rota system and return to their usual practice when not in the resort. Staff with families have a very difficult time trying to secure accommodation. It will be noted that accommodation is provided only on proof of full time employment: those who come to Yulara speculatively depend on friends to accommodate them until they are housed. As soon as someone leaves employment, they are given forty-eight hours notice to vacate the resort. Some staff opt out of this system by living in a caravan park (not for tourists) on the outskirts of the resort, where they pay ground rent only.

During the period of my fieldwork, the resort underwent a few changes. Yulara was designated as a township, and as such had a town council and police and fire services. The town council undertook a number of fund-raising activities to provide various services for residents, including child care, Royal Flying Doctor Service, a counselling service and the library. The Northern Territory government sold 40% of its holding in Yulara in the 1990s; but in 1997 it sold the remainder of its stock (including the housing stock), as the resort was not making a profit. The construction company Lend Lease

bought the resort, and in December 1997 the Yulara town council was abolished by an Act of Parliament, which decreed that the place was not a town but was merely a resort. This provoked impassioned opposition from residents who feared that by being downgraded to a resort there would be no obligation on the behalf of the NT to provide a police service, and so everyone would be subject to the draconian resort security. Residents feared that their already high rents would rise, they would lose the community resource centre, counsellor and child care. The vociferous public meetings were in vain, and Yulara town council was abolished. Resort management sought to appease residents by promising an Olympic sized pool (the provision of swimming pools is a popular tactic, as will be discussed in chapter six). This merely brought derisory remarks, as the townspeople had already raised the money for the pool's construction themselves. That fund was appropriated, with the promise that it would be spent on community projects. At the same time that the Yulara township was abolished, the resort itself also changed its name from the Ayers Rock Resort Company (ARRC) to Ayers Rock Resort Management (ARRM).

One of the main objections to being downgraded to a resort concerned the notion of community. In parliament it was argued that the 1000 or so staff did not comprise a community. This was hotly contested by locals, and indeed it can be shown that there are numerous events in the Yulara calendar that show that community feeling and a sense of belonging are features of Yulara life. There are two formal balls each year, a charity pram race, jam sessions at the residents' club, citizenry awards, weekend films, crop a cop day where they auction off the right to shave participants' heads, quiz nights, 60s nights,

bingo, darts, jazz and poetry evenings, open day at the college, talent nights, Christmas carols, church services, Christmas parties and Santa on a camel.

In August 1997, the resort built a boarding school, Nyangatjatjara College,[12] for Anangu children from Mutitjulu and Docker River. Previously, children of secondary school age had to go to boarding school in Alice Springs or Adelaide. Anangu voiced a number of concerns over their children being sent so far away for schooling. Rupert Goodwin, an Anangu ranger explained, "The children go away to school, and they are taught together, boys and girls. In the past we kept them separate. Now we find them smoking marijuana and having sex, and the girls come home with a baby. And we wonder what they are learning at school. They aren't concentrating on learning, on education." The Ayers Rock Resort Company provided the land, demountable buildings and $180,000 a year in services for the school for the next twenty-five years. At the opening ceremony, attended by Anangu and representatives from ARRC, the ATSIC representative thanked ARRC for the financial assistance but pointed out that no Anangu were employed in the resort. Nyangatjatjara College has room for fourteen students; for five weeks the girls will be taught there, then they return to their traditional communities for five weeks while the boys are at school. That way Anangu children can learn both their traditional ways, and have a Western education.

Tourists

Until the 1950s, the majority of visitors to Uluru were explorers, anthropologists, prospectors and doggers (those paid to cull dingoes). Donald

MacKay landed a plane at the rock in 1930, and in the same year Michael Terry drove a Morris truck along the base of Uluṟu, in the tracks of Gosse's 1874 expedition. By 1948 there was a rough road to the rock, it taking two days to travel from Alice Springs to Uluṟu (C. Williams pers. comm). Tourism to Uluṟu really started in the 1950s when Len Tuit brought the first camping tours from Alice Springs. In his first year he brought a total of eight people to the rock, and by 1952 the rock had a total of 2000 visitors (Alanen 1992). By 1996 numbers had risen to 350,000 visitors a year, and they are expected to top half a million by the year 2000[13]. Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park is the most visited attraction in the Northern Territory, receiving 44% of all visitors to the Northern Territory (NTTC 1997). There are 180 licensed tour operators working within the Park, some from Yulara and Alice Springs, but many others operating interstate.

The stated intention of 70% of all tourists is to climb Uluṟu, and my research has revealed that approximately 45% actually do so. The Climb is a 1.7 km hike up to the top of the rock, with a chain to hold onto only on the steepest parts of the climb. Climbing is extremely dangerous: the Park averages one death per year on the Climb, though while I was conducting fieldwork there were three deaths in ten months, and five deaths in total during my two year stay. Causes of death are heat stroke, falling and heart attacks. It should also be mentioned that only deaths occurring actually on the rock itself are recorded, heart attacks brought on through exertion that occur back in the

[12]Nyangatjatjara is simply the name of another Western Desert language.
[13]These figures are based on the sale of Park entry tickets. Children do not need a ticket. Further, it should be noted that as Park tickets are valid for five days, there is a strong black market trade in 'selling on' the unused portion. As the average stay is 1.6 nights, it is feasible

resort are not classified as deaths on the rock. There are also numerous accidents on Uluṟu: on average there is one rescue a week, sometimes involving the use of a rescue helicopter. When weather conditions changed suddenly one day in August 1998, 120 schoolchildren had to be rescued, a mammoth operation involving helicopters, rangers, all paramedics and every ambulance volunteer in Yulara. The climb is closed when adverse weather conditions (lightning, storms, rain and high winds) are predicted. In January 1998 the Park decided to close the climb at 8am on all days when the predicted temperature was expected to exceed 36 C; on those days the walk at the Valley of the Winds out at Kata Tjuṯa is also closed. Previously the climb closed at 10am, when the temperature was expected to exceed 38 C. The new ruling was brought in suddenly, without consultation with the tourism industry. This caused considerable antagonism, as tour operators were left to explain to disappointed tourists why they could not climb the rock, when all the tour brochures describe it as the thing to do!

Climbing Uluṟu is offensive to Aṉangu. To them, the site of the Climb is a sacred pathway taken by their Mala ancestors during a ceremony, so to climb is sacrilege. Also, as the traditional owners of the rock, Aṉangu feel responsible when anyone is killed or injured on Uluṟu. There are signs warning tourists of both the dangers of climbing, and the wishes of their hosts, at the base of the climb and within the Cultural Centre.

Having decided not to climb Uluṟu, tourists may take a base tour of the rock, or visit selected waterholes and art sites. Apart from the numerous

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for a ticket to be used by three people, but it would only register in Park statistics as one visitor.

commercial tours, there are also the free ranger led walks and the Cultural Centre. About 80% of tourists (my surveys) visit Kata Tjuṯa to do either the seven kilometre Valley of the Winds Walk, or the less strenuous Olga Gorge Walk (1.5 km). Kata Tjuṯa can be extremely dangerous: broken ankles from stumbling on the uneven conglomerate, and particularly heat stroke, which can be fatal. The rock sides of Kata Tjuṯa absorb heat, so if the temperature is 46 C in the open desert, it is likely to be 56 C inside the gorges. Heat stroke is caused by dehydration: in such extreme temperatures the body needs to take in at least a litre of water per hour to survive.

There are limited sites for visitors within the National Park: Muṯitjulu waterhole and art caves, Kaṉtju Waterhole, the climb, the Cultural Centre, Olga Gorge and the Valley of the Winds. The majority of 350,000 tourists a year cram into these few places, many of them at the same time. At 9am every day, there are queues of coach passengers waiting to get into Muṯitjulu waterhole, as each tour company takes its tourists on similar programs. For morning tours, the typical progression is: sunrise viewing on Uluṟu, the climb, Muṯitjulu waterhole, Cultural Centre, then back to the resort in time for tourists to leave on the lunch-time flight.

Recognising that tourism itself was threatening the integrity of certain sites around the Park, the Board of Management commissioned the Visitor Management Strategy (VMS) to make recommendations to improve interpretation within the Park, and control visitor activities so that the sheer volume of visitors would not destroy the experience for each other. The VMS consultants first came to analyse the situation in March 1997. They returned in June 1997 when a Safety Audit was performed on the Park. It was ironic that

the first public meeting organised to discuss the VMS was opened by a speech by Grant Hunt, the resort managing director, who said, "The guest needs to believe in the rapport between the resort and the Park" as, predictably, the meetings were used by all parties to air grievances about the others. Anangu were criticised by tour operators for not attending the meetings, when some of *their* representatives had flown in from Sydney just to attend. The Park was criticised for not consulting the industry more before making decisions that affect tourists. Tour operators based in Yulara said that those coming in from interstate were ignorant about the area, and it was they who spoiled the relationship between the Park and the tourism industry. The VMS consultants were expected to give their completed report in September 1997. As has already been stated, they were dismissed by the Board of Management after producing the interim report. The tourism industry was not consulted about their dismissal.

Since the cancellation of the VMS, two more incidents have soured the relationship between the Uluru -Kata Tjuta National Park and the tourism industry. One was the sudden decision to change the rules on when the Climb and the Valley of the Winds Walk should be closed for safety reasons, as detailed above. The second was the Park's decision that the Yulara resort was no longer to be regarded as a tour operator. Licensed tour operators are entitled to a $1.50 discount on the price of Park Entry tickets, which retail to tourists for $15. Thus for every ticket operators sell, they make $1.50 in commission. The resort had to then buy and sell Park entry tickets for $15. As all visitors must have a ticket to enter the Park, purchased either within the resort or at the Park Entry Station, the resort retaliated by refusing to stock

Park tickets, causing a traffic bottleneck in the mornings as coaches full of tourists individually purchased tickets. The debacle was exacerbated by the fact that the entry station can only accept cash for tickets, and has no facilities for credit cards, EFTPOS cards or foreign currency.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the history and development of the area, and pinpointed the contentious aspects of tourism in this world famous national park. Historically, Anangu have suffered dislocation and exploitation at the hands of whites. In the contemporary situation these conflicts are still evident, and the identified groups in the area are also involved in antagonistic relationships with each other and with Anangu. Typically, each group fails to recognise its dependence on the others. These confrontations will be explored in the rest of the thesis. The following chapter will examine the guiding principle of the National Park, *Tjukurpa*, and how it is manipulated to illustrate inequalities between Anangu and whitefellas.

Chapter Three: *Tjukurpa*[1]

"This isn't just a painting or a story, it's in the land.": Cassidy Uluṟu.

Tjukurpa can be defined as 'Dreaming', the term used for Aboriginal law and lore in other parts of Australia.[2] Aṉangu are reluctant to use the term 'Dreaming' as it implies something vague, fictional or unreal, and to them, *Tjukurpa* is very real. It can usefully be described as a prescription for life, covering all aspects of Aboriginal life, philosophy and religion. Stanner's 1965 article describes how Dreaming stories provide a 'poetic key to reality', and define 'good' and 'bad' behaviour. Aṉangu themselves describe how *Tjukurpa* informs them of all they need to know in order to survive: it tells them not only about the activities of the Ancestors whose adventures shaped the landscape, but also the correct way to kill and cook a kangaroo, to protect their kin, the appropriate behaviour in every situation. Rose describes it as fundamentally concerned with moral relationships: between people, between people and the land, and between the land and natural species (1992: 56).

Dreaming has long been the subject of anthropological debate, highlighting as it does the interconnectedness of Aboriginal experience, particularly rights and responsibilities towards the land. I shall review the literature here first, before examining the particular situation pertaining at Uluṟu.

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[1] In Yankunytjatjara the term is *wapar*.

[2] I am indebted to Chris Ryan (pers. comm.) for alerting me to the fact that 'Dreaming' rather than 'Dreamtime' is the pertinent phrase in Aboriginal studies.

Dreaming

All Aboriginal Law and conceptions of land derive from the Dreaming. The Dreaming was the creative epoch in the mythical past, where the Ancestors, part human, part animal, roamed the earth. The places where the Ancestors encountered adventures have been recorded in the physical landscape, and many of these constitute sacred sites. It is the duty of Aborigines to maintain the sacred sites, as these are a link to the Ancestors who created the earth and who continue to give life to their descendants. Sacred sites are a major locus of power, which is dangerous if not treated appropriately by the initiated (Biernoff 1978). Aborigines believe that the land was bequeathed to them by the ancestors, and this is symbolised by sacred paintings, songs and ritual objects. The ancestors gave stretches of land to each clan (patrilineal, matrilineal or ambilineal descent group), and this land holds the spirit children which will animate clan members while foetuses.

The Dreaming ancestors left behind a fund of life giving essence to which the human spirit returns on death. This essence is located in the clan lands and particularly in the sacred sites. Thus, everyone's ancestry dates back to the Dreaming itself, and goes to form the clan's future. Links between humans and animals are celebrated in totemic myths and rites, and Dreaming Law explicates that clan members are responsible for the fertility of totemic species (Tonkinson 1978). The sacred rituals perpetuate the fertility of the land, and bring a sense of permanence (Elkin 1964: 199). The fundamental link a person has is with the Dreaming connected with the place of his conception, as he is its incarnation (Myers 1991: 130), and on death his

animating spirit returns to the clan land, and is then available to animate another foetus (Williams 1986). Thus, one should control the land of one's Dreaming.

Aspects of the Dreaming are celebrated and reinforced through myth and songs. From an early age children are told Dreaming stories. The myths themselves tell of the creative powers of the ancestors and often have associated songs and rituals[3]. The songlines trace the routes the ancestors followed while wandering in the Dreaming, and the rituals attempt to dramatise some of the adventures. They also have a practical value, as the songlines give information on distant countries, should anyone want to visit them, and the songs describe the dangerous sites on distant countries (Tonkinson 1978: 105). Myers (1991) argues that individuals identify closely with their clan lands and ancestors, and this is manifested in the songs where often the songs are sung in the first person.

However, the Dreaming is not as static as it first appears. Many writers have documented its inherent flexibility and adaptability. Tonkinson describes the way Western Desert Aborigines adopt the methods and myths of their neighbours. He compares this with the Aranda of Central Australia whom he describes as 'jealously conservative' (1978: 103). New combinations of old material, and new material revealed through dream sequences exemplify the adaptability of Dreaming rituals. I would argue that this creativity is also used in the political realm, and that further, the Dreaming myths themselves are manipulated by the Aboriginal elders to create political prestige. Tonkinson

[3]Although myths often have associated songlines and rituals, some are autonomous and have no associated songline (Tonkinson 1978: 105). However, Tonkinson does not explain this

himself argues that the myth's inherent flexibility is exploited, as there are always gaps in the cosmology allowing new stories about the ancestors to be accommodated. Williams (1986) writes that the myths are a source of an indefinite number of themes which are used to create relationships. Each landowning group is connected to others through the wanderings of the Dreaming ancestors, so clans on the same Dreaming track claim a relationship (Peterson 1976). As the further adventures and wanderings of ancestors are revealed, or created, thus new relationships with other clans are created.

Stanton (1983) writes that with the removal of Aborigines from their traditional clan lands into settlements and missions, the Dreaming has been elaborated, so that now spirit children from the clan lands are believed to be able to travel long distances underground or through the air in order to animate clan members. Thus, distant and dispersed clan members can still hold an identification with their traditional clan lands. Similarly, Rose has described how a person's spirit may return to their traditional lands in the form of a rainbow, wind or shooting star (1992: 70). Howard has also documented how the flexibility of Aboriginal beliefs enables cultural survival in new situations. Rather than development causing social disruption, change is encompassed by building on the indigenous structure (1978).

Kolig (1981) also recognises the malleability of the Dreaming, when he discusses the development of Aboriginal myth regarding an area referred to as 'Noah's Ark' in the Kimberleys region of Western Australia. Contemplation of the mythical elaboration of this site led Kolig to question the

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fragmentation. Compare this also with Moyle (1983) who asserts that there are no songs without an associated ritual.

purpose of Dreaming and sites. He identifies two anthropological positions. The first way of examining Dreaming myths is to see them as a theory of the landscape, to warn of its dangers, a way of intellectualising the uncontrollable. The second position sees myths as a way to legitimise use of land and mobilisation of groups. Further to these anthropological theories, there is an Aboriginal explanation which Kolig describes as 'ambivalent', but can be better described as tautologous: the land was created by Dreaming ancestors, and the veracity of this is proved because the features of the landscape are a physical manifestation of this. Kolig examines both sides of the Aboriginal explication and discards the notion that the land verifies the myth, as he argues that Aborigines do not need empirical proof of the activities of the ancestors. As to whether myth functions to legitimise the land, he points out that the most impressive areas often have no story attached to them, and seemingly insignificant locations (a tree, a small rock, for example) may be important sacred sites. Therefore this is an unlikely function of myth. Kolig formulates his own Levi-Straussian theory whereby Dreaming myths are prior to land, being formed in the mind, and then transferred to a site. This allows for the resonances that are found in Aboriginal Dreaming throughout the continent, and enables myths of one group to be passed on or taken over by another group. It also allows for the elaboration and manufacture of 'new' sites (Kolig 1981).

In contrast, Myers, on the basis of work among the Pintupi of the Western Desert, describes the Dreaming as presenting all things in the world as timeless and unchanging; thus they cannot be altered by the actions of humans (1991: 52). The problem he explores is that of how the Pintupi

reconcile the conflicting demands of reciprocal help and obligation necessary for survival amongst hunter-gatherers, and the Pintupi emphasis on the autonomy of the individual, whereby no-one is willing to be told what to do by anyone else. Myers shows how these requirements are reconciled by recourse to the Dreaming, which is perceived to be outside society, unchangeable and 'morally imperative' (1991: 70). He argues that in this respect the Dreaming can be seen in terms of a Durkheimian 'collective conscience', as '[t]he Dreaming as narrative provides a framework of shared identity among people that is the very condition of their mutual participation with each other' (1991: 255). He says that the Dreaming replicates and reinforces hierarchical relationships between elders (initiated men) and juniors (non-initiated men). The elders hold the ritual knowledge necessary for social advancement, and so juniors are complicit in their subordination (Myers *ibid.*). The elders deny their actions are motivated by self advancement by invoking the Dreaming: an external authority unable to be challenged. They assert that in initiating the juniors and instructing them in ritual matters they are 'looking after' the Dreaming (p.220). The juniors are complicit in this because they are unable to become autonomous without the help of the elders: from them they learn the ritual knowledge which is a requirement of becoming a full adult (p.224). Myers concludes his discussion of Dreaming by asserting that the Dreaming does not emphasise the experience of negotiation in everyday life. Thus the ontological status of the Dreaming as unchanging, as opposed to its lived reality as negotiable and changing, forms the basis for political involvement and manipulation (1991: 288).

Using Myers' ideas, I hypothesise that in the contemporary situation the Dreaming can be seen as a cultural resource in the face of extreme intervention by Whites as it is a source of constancy in the face of change. The myths provide a rationalisation and authority for the rituals they underpin. As the rituals are controlled by the elders, their authority is ratified. But I contend that this means that it is difficult to challenge Dreaming 'inventions'. My theory is that the Dreaming hides the power inequalities in Aboriginal culture i.e. that theoretically all men could attain the ritual status of elder but not all do so. Eldership, as Sackett (1978) points out, is based on personal qualities of maturity, and commitment to and knowledge of the Dreaming, rather than simply age; and that eldership is vested in such worthy individuals and then passed down by them to certain others. Therefore there is an obvious power differential, and an opportunity for political machinations.

Land

Myers (1982) asserts that there are two ways of understanding Aboriginal territorial organisation: the tradition that follows Radcliffe-Brown in identifying patrilineal 'bands' or hordes that own territory, defend it and live within their group boundaries; and that which asserts that permanent organisational units do not exist but that one must examine the resources and flexibility of residence groups. However, I feel that the different anthropological stances can more usefully be seen as an ethnographic continuum, from the clearly defined land units described by Radcliffe-Brown, to the individual autonomy presented by Myers. I shall examine the models put forward by Radcliffe-Brown and his adherents; a less rigid model

described by Meggitt; and finally a very fluid model espoused by Williams and Myers.

The initial problem concerns terminology. Writers have variously used the terms tribe, horde, band, clan and lodge to describe Aboriginal social groupings. For Spencer and Gillen, tribal groups were identified by a distinctive language, political affiliation, and control over a bounded tract of land which had existed 'from time immemorial'. They also regarded all tribal institutions, such as marriage and totems, to be fundamentally the same across Australia (Spencer and Gillen 1904: 13f). Radcliffe-Brown, Birdsell and Tindale also saw the tribe as a clearly bounded, social and spatial unit (Peterson 1976). Elkin identifies five characteristics of the tribe: they own and inhabit a definite area of country; they have a distinctive language; they know themselves by a distinct name; they have customs that differ from those of their neighbours; and they have distinctive rights and beliefs (1964: 27).[4] Elkin recognised the tribe as a territorial and linguistic grouping, but acknowledged that it rarely functioned as a whole in food collecting: that was the role of the clan. He argued that the tribe was composed of a number of patrilineal clans, and the composition of the horde (or foraging group) was the patrilineal clan plus the women there through virilocal residence rules (Elkin 1964: 47).

Hiatt traces the origin of the term 'horde' to Howitt and Fison in 1883. Radcliffe-Brown followed their ideas in 1913 when he discussed patrilineal

[4]Berndt and Berndt question the validity of the term tribe itself, arguing that Aborigines themselves have no word that corresponds with it. They argue that what is described by anthropologists as a tribe, on the basis of distinctive language and occupying a recognised country, is actually comprised of several small units which have spiritual attachments to various localities (Berndt and Berndt 1964:34ff).

clans as land owning groups.[5] Kaberry, in 1935, distinguished between the horde as landowners and the foraging group, and later writers have emulated this idea, but substituting the word 'clan' where Kaberry uses 'horde' (Hiatt 1996: 20ff). Thus there are two groups under discussion: the land owning clan (often described as patrilineal, but in actuality sometimes matrilineal or ambilineal) as a descent group with responsibility for the sacred sites and spiritual well-being of the clan lands; and the collection of individuals who reside, forage and hunt together.

Stanner (1965a) follows the Radcliffe-Brownian model of social organisation and distinguishes between an 'estate' or 'country' which was traditionally owned by a patrilineal descent group and covered a continuous stretch of ground; and the 'range' which was the area of land over which the group normally hunted and foraged. The range was usually included within the estate, but theoretically the two could be dissociated: it was possible to live in one place and belong in another. He acknowledges also that within the estate and range there may be areas of marginal land that are scarcely used, and he recognises that land was not rigorously bounded.

He also offers a critique of Hiatt who writes that typically hordes were composed of members of a number of totemic descent groups, and regularly sought food in areas other than their own estates. Stanner argues that Aborigines have never maintained boundaries in the Western sense, but that each descent group was necessarily in a relationship of mutual dependence with other neighbouring groups, brought about through marriage, kinship

[5]Among different Aboriginal groups, descent may be patrilineal, matrilineal or ambilineal. Howitt's 1885 work adds more confusion to the plethora of terms and definitions by saying 'horde' referred to a matrilineal group, whereas he meant a foraging group (Hiatt 1996: 20).

links, trade and rituals. He asserts that the Radcliffe-Brownian model of Aboriginal land use is theoretically valid for the entire continent, while admitting that specific groups may deviate from the 'general type'. The distinction between specific actions and the 'general type' also applies to land exploitation, whereby Aborigines have responsibility for defined estates, but also have a moral duty to share resources with others. Thus, foraging groups may have been able to utilise the resources on other groups' estates (1965a). Stanner therefore defends the rigid Radcliffe-Brownian model, while admitting the practice of negotiation.

Stanner (1965a) asserts that there was no naturalisation or permanent movement between groups. He recognises that there was some movement between groups, but he fails to realise the role of the manipulating, astute individual described by writers such as Myers. Stanner disagrees with Hiatt's assertion that descent groups may have adopted outsiders into the group. He argues that cases whereby members of another descent group serve as joint owners of territory are not instances of 'adoption' or 'naturalisation'; however, he does not elaborate on what they are instances of. I would argue that, as Stanner is alert to the ecological aspects of Aboriginal life (the necessity of sharing resources with other groups), he should recognise the ecological sense of adoption of others as owners and managers.

Initially anthropological writing on Aboriginal land use compared the situation adopted by numerous tribes in order to ascertain general principles of land holding and exploitation (e.g. Radcliffe-Brown, Spencer and Gillen, Elkin). However, Meggitt's 1962 ethnography on the Warlpiri (Walbiri) of Central Australia was the first major work to concentrate exclusively on one

tribe. Meggitt's work is a major departure from the Radcliffe-Brownian model of land holding. He argues that the Warlpiri divide their tribal land into four major countries, the largest of which comprises 500 people. The residents of each country are self-sufficient, and move in huge groupings during the good season, yet divide into smaller groups when resources are more scarce (Meggitt 1962: 47ff). He argues that the food gathering groups are not composed of patrilineal hordes, but are much more fluid, and are as likely to be composed through friendship affiliations and personal preferences as kinship links (*ibid.*:51). However, the distinct tribal countries are still rigidly bounded with stable membership. I am rather uneasy about Meggitt's analysis because it is improbable that groups of up to 250 people, moving, hunting and foraging together could survive in the Western Desert (even during the good season), and that rapid and serious depletion of species would be a likely outcome.

Several writers have discussed the relationship between the area exploited by the horde (the range), and the land owned by the patrilineal clan (the estate). Kolig explains this distinction by saying the clan estate was usually too small to support a group, so they were forced to seek resources on other tracts of land. Kolig's analysis of Aboriginal land holding is the opposite of Stanner's. He distinguishes between the clan lands as 'spiritual survival' and the range as 'physical survival' (Kolig 1978). Meggitt, also wishing to distinguish between those who belong to the land and those who exploit it uses the terms 'lodge' to identify those connected with the rituals and sacred sites, and 'residential group' to indicate those who live on the land (1962: 211). Similarly, Berndt (1976) identifies a local group, which has ritual and

religious ties to the land involving totemic increase, as opposed to the horde, which is the group which occupies and exploits the land. He stresses that these are not synonymous. Layton (1983) notes that among the Pitjantjatjara, the single word *ngura* is used to mean country, estate, range, and a residential camp; thus the distinctions formulated by anthropologists may not necessarily be meaningful to Aborigines themselves. Rose has also noted that for Aborigines in the Victoria River Valley area of the Northern Territory, *ngurra* refers to a person's own camp, the family area, the clan area, a geographical region, a language area and an ecological zone. The definition is able to be manipulated in different contexts to include or exclude those described as countrymen (Rose 1992: 117). The fluid composition of these groups is well documented by Williams on the Yolngu, and Myers writing about the Pintupi.

Williams (1982), discussing the Yolngu in Arnhem land in the Northern Territory, disagrees that clan land was bounded, but argues that sites that symbolised the title to land are focal, though not necessarily central to the land they stand for, and that territory was always marked by geographical features such as rivers and hills. Further, within each area there were smaller, less important features which were also named. Marginal areas or those rarely used were not detailed specifically, but areas of frequent or intense occupation were clearly demarcated. However, it was necessary to be aware of when one is entering another territory, as one must ask permission before entering another group's land as the spirit residing there will be hostile to strangers. Permission may be asked directly or indirectly[6]. By asking permission one is

[6]Williams (1982) writes that indirect means of asking permission to enter the land may involve camping a short distance from the land and lighting a fire. If not explicitly refused, it

recognising the right of owners to grant permission to camp or hunt on the land. Thus, the people who are asked for permission gain prestige by the simple act of being recognised as entitled to give or refuse permission. The owners in turn are obligated to share their resources with others. Thus, as Williams says, rights are inherent in those who control access to the land, and those who express a need for its resources.[7]

Apart from gaining temporary access to resources, there are also five major ways to acquire land: links between clan lands forged by ancestral tracks (as Dreaming ancestors moved across the land they left tracks which are seen to join land owned by different clans. Sacred sites are seen as evidence of this link); conception place; marriage; claiming land in one's mother's estate; or, based on kin ties and the needs of one's own group, an individual may simply approach the head of a land owning group and ask for a portion of land. Once individuals have been granted a parcel of land, they are shown the ritual objects connected with the particular Dreaming of the land. The ritual objects symbolise the handing down of the land from the ancestors of the clan (Williams 1982). One of the most serious breaches is that of manufacturing ritual sacred objects without the authorisation of the elders. This is a serious breach because the objects symbolise the ownership of the land (Williams 1987: 71). However, revelation of sacred objects to mark the transfer of land does not mean that the land has been granted in perpetuity but only that a

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is assumed that permission has been granted. This method of asking permission was also related to me during my fieldwork at Uluṟu.

[7] Similarly, Myers asserts that to own something is to have the right to be asked about it. To 'hold' the country is to have the right to be consulted about visits to the place (1991: 149). He writes that access to resources is rarely denied as prestige arises in being asked, and there is nothing further to be gained by refusing permission to enter the land (Myers 1982).

specific and subsidiary right in land has been transferred. Thus, it may not be possible to bequeath these acquired parcels of land (Williams 1982).

Myers argues that amongst the Pintupi of the Western Desert, social boundaries and group formations are of little consequence: the Pintupi emphasise the autonomy and decision making capabilities of the individual (1991: 18). Pintupi individuals try to gain rights to land in many estates (Myers 1991: 158), as exercising secondary rights in land is a way to gain entry to potentially hostile areas (Stanton 1983). Sutton and Rigsby (1982) also recognise the individualist conception of Aboriginal life and maintain that all Aborigines have the choice of where to live.

Myers details several ways of acquiring land in another estate, mostly based on kinship connections through parents and grandparents, and through the conception places of individuals, and their parents and grandparents. He also lists a connection with the land if individuals are born, initiated, or have resided on the land, or if one of their close relatives died at or near the land in question (1991: 129). In contrast to Stanner's emphasis on well-defined groups, Myers (1982) discusses the individual networks of kin and 'countrymen' (those with whom one shares ritual responsibility for an estate) brought about by the extensive travelling that Aborigines undergo, particularly when younger. Thus, individuals develop their own network of 'countrymen': people with whom they can camp, or claim access to parcels of land, and each network is different for each member of the residential group. This extensive travelling fulfils the ideal of individual autonomy, but it depends on knowledge as strangers are treated with suspicion as they bring the threat of sorcery, and because there is less knowledge about the land and its resources.

Myers (1991) also writes that claims of 'my country' do not necessarily mean ownership of its rituals, but may simply mean a right to live there and to exploit the land's resources. He differentiates between owners and workers of the land, similarly to Williams' distinction between owners and managers.[8] The workers or managers of the country have a role in the maintenance and preparation of ritual sites and objects. The owners perform the ceremonies; however they are not able to visit the sacred sites without the permission of the workers. Myers says the roles are complementary, and that together owners and workers 'hold' the country. This assigning of complementary roles helps to preserve and continue esoteric knowledge and sites, and secondary claims to land ensure the continued custodianship of the land. Myers writes that this is particularly important for Western Desert Aborigines, whose living is marginal and population density is low (1991: 154).

These fluid and negotiable attachments to land may be used politically. Sutton and Rigsby (1982) discuss the way land is used as a political resource to attract another group or individual's political support. Thus land may be granted in an attempt to sway the political attachments of future generations. The land may also be used politically as a symbol of identity. Thus, all people living on a particular river drainage system, for example, may consider themselves united for certain purposes. Sutton and Rigsby thereby assert that scattered estates are testimony to local politics.

I feel that many of the writers presented here can be reconciled using Stanner's distinction between the 'general type' and the localised practice:

[8] Regarding the Yolngu, Williams says that ties to one's Mother's land were crucial a person was responsible for maintaining both M's and MM's land (1986: 47). Children of female

they have emphasised one aspect of the ethnography or the other. Thus, Fred Myers concentrates on the actual movement of individuals, whereas Elkin emphasises the structural rules of land owning. There is also an Aboriginal model of land use to be considered which presents both sides of this debate, and may have caused the different emphasis of various writers. In land claims cases, Aboriginal groups portray a delimited group of individuals with responsibility and ties to a defined tract of ground. However, if they are asked about actual land usage, they describe movement between groups, and considerable fluidity and negotiation in ownership of the land. It could be argued that the structural model of land ownership, having been elevated to a legal model used in deciding land claims cases, is similarly manipulated by politically astute Aboriginal groups.

In the early decades of this century, anthropologists were concerned to recreate traditional Aboriginal models of land holding; a concern that persisted into the 1970s. Now that Aboriginal land rights have been ratified by legislation, it could be argued that attempts to reconstruct traditional land holding are less relevant, and anthropologists have turned to more pertinent issues of health, housing, identity, and the concerns of urban Aborigines, amongst others. However, the basic Radcliffe-Brownian model of land use persists in modern legislation. The 1976 *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* recognised both the spiritual association with the land, and the traditional rights to forage over a tract of land. Although earlier land claims have perhaps emphasised the spiritual link with the land, later legislation can

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members of the group were termed 'managers' and had the right to assent or veto any major decision affecting the land, and this right was regularly exercised.

definitely be seen to pursue the notion of traditional foraging rights. The *Native Title Act 1993* gave Aborigines the ability to claim foraging rights over land, even if there was a pastoral lease on the land, and the right to be consulted over land usage where a Native Title claim has been successful. They may claim compensation for loss of use over areas where traditionally they would have foraged, but the area is now in private ownership.

The discussion so far has demonstrated the fluid, negotiable character of Aboriginal land holding. I feel there are a number of political implications to be drawn out: the ontological status of the Dreaming; prestige through land ownership; utilisation of the lands of extinct clans; autonomy of the individual. Land is a religious, economic and political resource, and a focus of Aboriginal identity. Land is a source of prestige: ownership is a social accomplishment, not a given, and rights to its sacred sites are only acquired through political activity. Elders gain prestige through controlling the land, and by deciding who should have access to its resources. Further, their prestige is enhanced by the necessity of being consulted over access to land.

The political nature of land ownership is obscured by the ontological priority of the Dreaming which states that all cultural behaviour in regard to land and ritual was laid down by the ancestors and is timeless and unchanging (Myers 1991: 129). As elders control the revelation of songs and myths, so they are able to manipulate these songs and myths to their own political advantage. It has already been shown how new songlines or Dreaming tracks are 'discovered' when one clan becomes extinct, and another group wishes to utilise its land. Thus, to gain a wider political following, I hypothesise that elders manipulate the creative potential in only partly revealed myths in order

to allocate land to political adherents, or to claim land for the group. Theoretically, none of the revelations can be challenged (though see the discussion in the next chapter), as they are deemed to be timeless, laid down by the ancestors yet so far 'undiscovered'. I think it is unlikely that individuals are unaware of the manipulations of the elders, but I hypothesise that direct challenges are rarely made because no one wants to usurp the ontological priority of the Dreaming, from which they draw a distinctive identity, and which they may need in the future for their own political ends.

Art

Art is also linked to the Dreaming, and is said to be a charter for land. The rights to reproduce certain paintings are inherent in the rights to hold the land, and both are said to be bequeathed by the ancestors. The events of the Dreaming provide themes for Aboriginal art, and reveal the way the past of the ancestors is connected to the present and the incarnation of their spiritual power. Traditionally, by painting, Aborigines release and renew ancestral power (Caruana 1993: 7). Equally painting may express the subsistence concerns (Layton 1992: 65). Rock art sites are often located close to water sources. It has been argued that those entering the land would be required to seek information about the meaning of the art from the land's owners, thereby implicitly seeking permission to utilise the land's resources (Tim Hill, pers. comm.).

Paintings are seen explicitly as title deeds for land. For Yolngu, once a clan has died out, its rituals and paintings may be taken over and kept alive by its ZDC clans (Morphy 1991: 68). Paintings are seen to contain ancestral

power, which may be dangerous if handled by the uninitiated (Morphy 1991: 102). As paintings are powerful, extreme punishments may be meted out to those who violate the restrictions on the communication of ritual knowledge, or who reproduce a painting they do not have rights in (Morphy 1991). Michaels discusses rights in paintings or designs as an ideology of reproduction rather than of creative authority. Thus paintings cannot be plagiarised as the designs are predetermined; anyone unlawfully reproducing a painting they do not hold rights in potentially gains the power and authority vested in the painting, and this includes rights to land (Michaels 1994: 145).

Morphy discusses the relative inner and outer of esoteric knowledge: that one only knows that the knowledge one had was 'outer' when one learns knowledge that is 'inner'. At an early age, Yolngu are taught very basic spiritual knowledge, then as they grow in experience and maturity they learn progressively more sacred, powerful and important information, which Morphy describes as 'inner'. As Yolngu men progress through life they move from the realm of outside knowledge to the inside until eventually they take a position where they can determine what is revealed to others, and thereby hold the potential for creativity (Morphy 1991: 294ff). Caruana also discusses the relative nature of Aboriginal sacred knowledge when he states that designs have multiple referents and ambiguities, each symbol covering many meanings. Thus a painting will have many 'readings' depending on the context in which it is presented (1993: 13). The comprehension of the painting depends on the ritual knowledge of the artist and the viewer, and the many levels of meaning allow even sacred designs to be revealed to the public

(Caruana 1993: 14). These ideas obviously are akin to Morphy's notions of the relative 'inner' and 'outer' of spiritual knowledge.

The relativistic nature of esoteric knowledge is manipulated when paintings or ritual objects are utilised for political purposes. Morphy writes that Yolngu art is commercialised so that it can be used as a symbol and propaganda in encounters with Europeans. The sale of art is seen to be a way of widening European understanding of Yolngu culture (1991: 20). It is safe to sell the paintings because the purchaser is unaware of the ritual content. Yolngu have reacted to the demand for their ritual art in several ways: by increasing the figurative content so paintings seem sacred but are not; releasing a number of restricted paintings but not those concerning myths which should not be known by the general public; selecting paintings that underline the clan's relationship with the land; or simply by withholding the meanings of the paintings (Morphy and Layton 1981). They have thereby fulfilled European expectations of what constitutes 'sacred art' while actually protecting the most sacred designs and preserving sacred content.

The display of sacred artefacts may not always result in cultural communication. In 1957, at Elcho Island, a set of carved sacred objects were erected by Aborigines in a public place. The objects had not previously been seen by uninitiated Yolngu. The intention behind the display was to enable Yolngu to assert that they too had immensely important, spiritual objects, and that they were willing to share these with Europeans if the act was reciprocated. Unfortunately the act was seen by both Yolngu and Europeans as one of desacralisation of the objects (Morphy 1983). Yolngu have also attempted to use paintings to promote a political profile. In 1963 a petition

pasted onto the back of a bark painting was sent to Canberra to protest at bauxite mining on the Gove Peninsula (Morphy 1983). By displaying sacred objects and paintings, Yolngu were asserting their right to hold the land, as it was passed to them with the associated paintings and ritual objects by the Dreaming ancestors. Similarly, Michaels discusses the way relocated Warlpiri in central Australia have traded Dreaming paintings for four wheel drive vehicles. The paintings depict sites for which they have ritual responsibility and were painted onto the school doors at Yuendumu.[9] Relocation has meant that Warlpiri are hundreds of miles away from the sites they are supposed to maintain, and access to sites is difficult. The only way to gain access to the sites is by four wheel drive vehicle. Thus, by exchanging the paintings for Toyotas, they are not only gaining a practical solution to the problem of location and maintenance of traditional sites (and gaining a prestige item!), but also asserting their rights to the land in question (1994: 55ff).[10]

Aboriginal art incorporates the ideology of the Dreaming, as paintings and designs were handed down by the ancestors as charters for land, to be used in rituals, and to celebrate the adventures of the ancestors. The relativistic nature of paintings means that they may be revealed to the uninitiated, and this may be performed for political reasons: to assert rights in land, to encourage interest in Aboriginal culture, to promote tolerance, and for economic gain.

The foregoing discussion has shown how the Dreaming underpins rights and obligations to land, and how the Dreaming itself and its

[9] Some of the doors may be seen at the Museum of South Australia in Adelaide.
[10] It should also be noted that not only will the four wheel drive vehicles enable access to difficult terrain, they also accommodate several people. Prestige is gained by access to a vehicle which will transport many people as it enables kinship obligations (transporting women and children) to be fulfilled.

manifestation in myth, ritual, painting and kinship may be manipulated to serve the political and economic interests of Aboriginal groups. With these ideas made explicit, I shall now examine the situation that pertains at Uluṟu.

Uluṟu

Tjukurpa is the guiding principle of the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park and it shapes the actions of both Aṉangu and white Park rangers in the maintenance and ideology of the National Park. *Tjukurpa* is the law by which Aṉangu live. Aṉangu are anxious that tourists should learn about *Tjukurpa*, and what the land means to them. A senior Aṉangu woman, Elsie, remarked at a council meeting, "The *Tjukurpa* is ours, it is dear to us. We have given a great deal of it for the tourists to see in the Cultural Centre. It came from our grandparents and is precious to us." Aṉangu encourage an appreciation of the *Tjukurpa* in several ways: through displays in the Cultural Centre, through ranger led walks in the National Park, with the help of Aṉangu Tours, and through running the tour operators' workshop.

The Cultural Centre was mooted as soon as the Park land was returned to Aṉangu in October 1985. It was written into the 1991 Plan of Management (ANPWS 1991), and opened in October 1995 at a cost of $5 million[11]. Aṉangu took the architects into the bush and told them *Tjukurpa* stories and drew designs in the sand, and said "We want our Cultural Centre to be like this." Aṉangu helped with the building and fitting of the whole of the Cultural Centre: many Aṉangu painted huge dot paintings on the bare walls to illustrate the stories being told, and Aṉangu learned new skills in the process, such as

mud brick making, tiles, ceramics and decorated glassware. A number of these new skills are now being utilised in the arts and crafts arena, providing a useful additional income for some Anangu.

Anangu requested that the Centre be built in the shape of two snakes, representing Kuniya and Liru, two characters from one of the *Tjukurpa* stories. The whole of the Cultural Centre reflects this snake theme: the shingles on the roof represent snake skin, the windows and sky lights are in the shape of snake eyes, and there are rounded booths of displays representing eggs in a snake's nest. Inside, the Cultural Centre is a visual feast, with paintings illustrating *Tjukurpa* stories, decorated floor tiles depicting women's and men's business (i.e. gendered ritual and subsistence responsibilities), embossed glass panels, and huge boards of text. There are videos of Aboriginal life, a film and slide show, and a display of how Anangu are involved in Park management. One of the most popular displays with tourists involves a series of push buttons which play bird calls, animal sounds and Pitjantjatjara words. In the central courtyard there are mulga (acacia) shelters where Anangu demonstrate traditional tool making and arts. Tourists enter the Cultural Centre to the sound of Anangu singing and talking, leading many to expect to see an *inma* (singing and dancing) in full swing once inside. The walls of the Cultural Centre are topped by curving lines of text in Pitjantjatjara and English. Panels of information are written in Pitjantjatjara first, then translated into European languages and Japanese. Signs for the toilets are in Pitjantjatjara: *wati* (men) and *minyma* (women). The Centre also has an art

[11]A detailed analysis of the Cultural Centre, and similar buildings, is offered in Fox and Fleet (forthcoming).

gallery, cafe and souvenir shop. Tour guides joke that the building housing the shops and cafe is the poisonous snake as, "That's where you get stung".

White rangers told me that when the Cultural Centre was being planned they were not consulted on the displays or design of the Centre, so when it was opened, it was unfamiliar to them. There was no general discussion amongst Park rangers about the design of the building, or what the displays inside should contain. Those who *were* involved in the design of the Cultural Centre told me it was specifically designed to offer information on many levels, so that if visitors do not engage with one level, they will on another level. This was supposed to replicate the way Anangu themselves learn about their culture: they learn a series of seemingly disconnected pieces, then on acquiring another piece of knowledge the other pieces fall together and become intelligible (Jon Willis, pers comm.)[12]. The entrance to the Cultural Centre, where the visitor finds himself suddenly in a cool, dark space is intended to recreate the feeling of walking into Kantju Gorge, a spiritual area for Anangu men, and to inspire a feeling of awe.

The Park Manager, Julian Barry, explained that the Cultural Centre is deliberately dense, packed with difficult information to process. The reason for this is to make tourists realise that Aboriginal culture is far too difficult for them to understand. In comparison, when tourists go to the Visitors' Centre in

[12]While discussing the piecemeal acquisition of knowledge, Jon and I reflected how this was also characteristic of anthropological fieldwork. At the time of the Cultural Centre's design, Jon himself was engaged in fieldwork with Anangu, specifically looking at the transmission of disease through men's ceremonies. The means of acquiring knowledge compares usefully with Morphy's discussion of 'chunks' of ancestral law. There may be several elements within each chunk: aspects of a story, painting, dances etc. and these elements may link to other Dreaming stories or to other clans. However, the chunks only become fully meaningful when they are enacted in ceremonies. Further, only some aspects of chunks are executed at a time, so a person has to be present at a large number of ceremonies in order to piece together the full, integrated meaning encompassed by the chunk (Morphy 1991: 101).

Yulara, with its simplistic portrayal of Aboriginal life, tourists may spend only a few minutes looking at the displays, yet feel that they have acquired an appreciation of Aboriginal life. The Cultural Centre is deliberately alienating to make visitors realise how complex Anangu culture is, and that they know nothing![13] Others told me that the Cultural Centre was based on the old ranger station displays. It had been intended to do a survey to indicate what kind of information and presentation tourists would respond to, but there was insufficient funding, so the old displays were used as a model. Having been commissioned by the Mutitjulu community to ascertain tourists' response to the Cultural Centre, and how Anangu's message could be refined or made more intelligible, I was informed by white rangers that as $5 million had been spent on building the Cultural Centre, it did not matter if the Cultural Centre communicated nothing to visitors, it was not going to be changed!

Anangu themselves have expressed a wish for the Cultural Centre to show Australians what their culture means to them, and that Aboriginal culture generally is worthwhile. This view has been expressed both in public: at meetings for the Visitor Management Strategy, in council meetings, in discussions during the Tour Operators' Workshop; and in private. They saw the Cultural Centre as a medium to put across messages about their own land and their role in maintaining it, but also saw it as a vehicle to promote respect for Aboriginal culture generally. The Cultural Centre has been viewed as a flagship for Aboriginal cultural centres, not only because the building has won a number of architectural awards, but because Anangu were instrumental in every part of the construction process.

[13]These notions will be discussed at greater length in the chapter entitled *Piranpa*.

The Park operates a Tour Operators' workshop up to three times a year, and attendance is encouraged for all employees of tour companies who will be guiding visitors around the National Park. Currently, attendance is not compulsory, though it has been mooted to make successful completion of the Tour Operators' Workshop a requirement for licensing of tour companies and accreditation of tour guides. Over three days, for twelve hours a day, guides are taught about the National Park, its history, management, and particularly its *Tjukurpa*. The teachers for the course are Anangu, white rangers, translators, and paramedics from the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Guides are taken on field-trips into the bush with senior Anangu who demonstrate patch burning, tracking, and discuss the natural species within the Park. Participants are encouraged to try bush tucker, and to attempt tracking. These field-trips inspire genuine admiration amongst those attending the course, and real affection for their Anangu teachers. Anangu also take the guides round Uluru and teach them the *Tjukurpa* stories, dotted with anecdotes about when they were children. Each participant is given a workbook, and at the end of each field-trip, lecture or demonstration they are required to complete a quiz sheet on the material they have learned. These are marked and determine whether or not accreditation is given. Throughout the course, the emphasis is on *Tjukurpa*. All sections of the course containing *Tjukurpa* are tested; those containing no *Tjukurpa* are not. So participants are tested on the Pitjantjatjara names of plants and animals, but not on the appropriate procedure to treat a snake bite or heat stress. For several years geology was disputed as being irrelevant to the course, and recently it has been removed from the syllabus.[14]

[14]The vexed question of geology will be discussed later in this chapter, and in the chapter

Asking questions during the course is discouraged: those who have pressing questions find they are written down (by the white teachers) with the promise that they will be answered at the end of the course. They are never answered. The course concludes with a 'Cross Cultural' question and answer session, with a number of Anangu attending, but before any question can be directed towards Anangu, a white teacher warns that questions must be sensitive. The tour guides are then thrown into a panic, not wanting inadvertently to offend Anangu, and so preface each query with 'My tourists often ask me ...' as a way of distancing themselves from any unintended offence. During the workshop, tour guides are told explicitly what they may or may not discuss with their tourists. Specifically they are informed of the three permitted *Tjukurpa* stories which may, indeed should, be told to tourists.[15] All other stories are outlawed. The three stories are also written and illustrated within the Cultural Centre, in the first winding corridor nicknamed 'The *Tjukurpa* Tunnel'. The authorised stories are: Kuniya and Liru; Lungkata; and the Mala people.

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entitled *Piranpa.*

[15] The use of the term 'story' to describe *Tjukurpa* events is problematic. When I entered the field, I was informed by whitefellas who had worked with Anangu extensively, not to use the term 'myth' as it has the connotations of fabrication and unreality, and I was advised always to use the term 'story'. Indeed, Anangu themselves use the word 'story' when discussing the *Tjukurpa*. In *Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara Dictionary, Tjukurpa* is defined as '1. Story. 2. Dreaming, Law. 3. Individual word. 4. Message.'. However, it could be argued that the term 'history' is more appropriate, as the *Tjukurpa* events, to Anangu, actually happened. The term 'history' is itself problematic as it implies events in the past, that have ceased; whereas *Tjukurpa* determines the present and the future. With these notions in mind, I have therefore opted to use the term Anangu themselves use when discussing *Tjukurpa* events.

Myers (1991: 48f) offers a fascinating discussion of the Pintupi distinction between *Tjukurpa* and narratives which are *mularrpa* (true, real or actual). He argues that there is not a logical opposition between the two, rather the Dreaming is the foundation of the visible world, whereas occurrences which are *mularrpa* take place in the present day and are witnessable.

Kuniya and Liru

Kuniya the woma python came to Uluṟu from the east, from Erldunda, bringing her eggs with her. She wanted her children to be born here because this is where she was born and where she grew up. There are two versions of how she brought her eggs: the first has her carrying them in her woman's bowl, or *piti,* on the top of her head. The other version tells of how the woma python produces a sticky spittle, spits on the eggs and then joins them into a ring, puts its head through and carries the eggs as a necklace. When Kuniya arrived at the eastern side of Uluṟu, she left her eggs safely at *Kuniya Piṯi*, then dived into the ground and went round to the southern side of the rock.

Kuniya had heard disturbing news about her nephew. He was being chased by Liru, poisonous snake men from the Kata Tjuṯa area in the west. When he arrived at Uluṟu the Liru *warmaḻa* (war party) surrounded him and started throwing their spears at him. The war party is visible today as a line of Desert Oak trees on the top of a sand dune in the west; the marks of the spears are left as a series of holes in the side of Uluṟu, close to the site of the Climb. But Kuniya's nephew was crafty, and when the spears flew towards him, he started dodging and weaving from side to side so that all the spears missed him. One Liru man stood to the side, and saw how Kuniya's nephew was dodging all the spears, then he crept up behind him and hit him on the head with his club, and killed him.

Kuniya heard this dreadful news, and, moving quickly now, came to confront the Liru man who had killed her nephew. The confrontation took place on the southern side of Uluṟu, near the Muṯitjulu waterhole. Kuniya was taunted by Liru, so she hit him with her woman's *wana* (digging stick). The

first blow she struck wounded him, and his blood is seen as a dark trickle down the side of the rock. With her second blow she chopped off his nose; a break in the rock records this event. And with her third blow she killed him. This fatal wound is a huge split down the side of Uluṟu. But Kuniya was still intensely angry, and she realised that she would have to control her anger, so she started to do a woman's skipping dance. At the end of her dance she spat out poison over the whole area to release her anger. Her anger dissipated, she scooped up the body of her nephew and took him up to the top of Uluṟu, and there the two of them were transformed into a water-serpent called Wanampi.

Lungkaṯa

Lungkaṯa was a sleepy lizard man,[16] and he came to Uluṟu, burning off the old spinifex and cleansing the country with fire. Lungkaṯa is the ancestor who taught Aṉangu how to manage the land using fire. When he came to Uluṟu he made his camp on the south-eastern side of the rock. Being a sleepy lizard, he wasn't much of a hunting man, so when he found an emu that had been speared but was not yet dead, he thought it was his lucky day. He killed the emu, cooked it, and cut it up.

The emu had been hunted by two bell-bird men, Panpanpalala, and they were following the drag mark of the spear through the sand. But somewhere along the way they lost the tracks of their emu. Seeing the smoke coming from Lungkaṯa's camp, they shouted to him, "Hey, *wati*! Have you seen an emu?" Lungkaṯa realised that he was in trouble, so he hid the pieces of

[16]Sometimes Lungkaṯa is described as a Blue-Tongued lizard.

emu meat behind his back, and lying through his teeth, called back, "Emu? Emu? No, no, I've not seen an emu."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. I haven't seen an emu."

Feeling rather suspicious, the Bellbird brothers left Lungkaṯa and made their way back to their camp.

Lungkaṯa realised he was in big trouble; soon the Bellbird men would work out that he had taken their emu. So he gathered all the pieces of emu meat into his arms and he started running round the side of Uluṟu. As he ran away, he scattered pieces of meat behind him. There are rocks around the base of Uluṟu that are said to be morsels of the emu: its head, and its thigh.

Meanwhile, on their way back to camp, the Bellbird men discovered the tracks of their emu, and next to the emu tracks were Lungkaṯa's tracks. "He's lied to us, and taken our emu! We're going to teach him a lesson!" So the Bellbird men set off round the rock in hot pursuit.

When he got to the south-western corner of Uluṟu, Lungkaṯa scrambled up the side of the rock, and hid himself in a cave, close to the very top of the rock. The Bellbird men stood at the bottom of the rock and shouted up to him, "Lungkaṯa, you're a liar and a thief! Come down now and face your punishment!"

Lungkaṯa poked his head out of the cave and said, "No, I'm not coming down."

The Bellbird men shouted up, "Come on, you know the Law. Come down now!"

Lungkaṯa replied, "No."

Once again the Bellbird men insisted he come down, and once again Lungkaṯa refused, so the Bellbird men returned to their camp and fetched a firestick. They went back to where Lungkaṯa was hiding, and they set fire to all of the country underneath the rock. The flames swept up the side of Uluṟu, and burnt Lungkaṯa in his cave. His dead body rolled down the side of the rock, leaving his burnt skin behind. On the rock today you can see the flames, Lungkaṯa's burnt skin, and the remains of his body: a small rock a few yards distant from the base of Uluṟu.

The Mala People

The Mala people were Rufous Hare Wallaby people who came to Uluṟu to perform their ceremonies. As part of their ceremonies they took a *ngaḻtawaṯa*, a ceremonial pole decorated with resin and feathers, up to the top of Uluṟu. *Ngaḻtawaṯa* can be seen today on the northern side of the rock. One of the reasons why Aṉangu do not like people to climb Uluṟu is because the route taken by climbers is that taken by the Mala ancestors, so the climb is a sacred pathway.

During ceremony time, the Mala separated into different groups: one cave for old women, one for young women and children, a cave for the uninitiated boys, and another cave for the senior men who were to perform the initiations. When they were part way through their ceremonies, the Mala people received an invitation from the *Wintalyka*, the Mulga Seed people, to attend *their* ceremonies. Under the Law, once ceremonies have started they must continue to the end, so the Mala people were forced to send back a refusal. But this angered the *Wintalyka*, and they decided to seek revenge.

They took the trunk of a tree with four branches attached to it, took two coals from the fire to be eyes, and covered the whole thing with hair and feathers and breathed life into it. They made an evil devil dingo-dog called Kurpany, and they sent him to wreak revenge on the Mala People. Kurpany moved through the countryside changing his shape: sometimes he was a sand-dune, sometimes a tree, and sometimes an invisible wind that suddenly rises up and falls away again. He came across the Mala women in their cave and frightened them, and they ran straight into men's business. Normally they would have been speared to death immediately for bursting in on men's secret business, but hot on their heels was Kurpany, who killed two of the Mala men, then rounded up all the Mala people and chased them round the rock and down into South Australia, where eventually Kurpany was killed, and where other Anangu hold the rest of the story. You can see the remains of the Mala men who were killed, and the caves that they all lived in, on the rock today.

It is emphasised that the stories which are told to tourists are at the simplest level, that given to young children. As Anangu progress through life, they learn progressively more complicated and exclusive levels of the stories and associated ritual behaviour. The level which is told to tourists is considered very simple, and therefore safe, in a similar way to the selection of paintings that are commercialised by Yolngu. More detailed versions of *Tjukurpa* stories are given in Mountford (1977). Mountford's works are outlawed by white rangers, though some persistent tour guides try to gain access to his work out of curiosity about the *Tjukurpa*.

There are other *Tjukurpa* stories associated with Uluṟu (stories connected to Kata Tjuṯa are considered too dangerous even to be acknowledged). It is permitted to mention Itjaritjari, a marsupial mole woman who made the caves at Uluṟu. Layton (1989: 3ff) has given stories concerning the origin of Uluṟu (the *Wiyai Kutjara* story; Luunpa, the kingfisher woman; and concerning a red lizard man called Tjati. Mountford also discusses Katiti, a human couple who resided at Uluṟu; and Tjintir-tjintirpa, the Willie-Wagtail woman (1977).

The *Wiyai Kutjara* (the Two Boys) story explains the origin of Uluṟu. During the *Tjukurpa*, two boys were playing with mud, and as part of their games they made a huge mud pie, then entertained themselves by sliding down it. This mud pie became Uluṟu, and where the boys trailed their fingers through the mud, the mud hardened to become the deep gorges and corrugations in the side of the rock (Layton 1989: 3). Tjati was a red lizard man who threw his boomerang and lost it in the side of Uluṟu. Where he clambered up the rock, plunging his hand into the rock in an attempt to retrieve his boomerang, he left behind caves and pools. Tjati died in a cave near Kaṉtju Gorge: this is a men's sacred site as his body is believed to be inside the cave. The other characters, Luunpa, Tjintjir-tjintjirpa and Itjaritjari feature in the Mala story as subsidiary characters; Mountford (1977) provides more details of their activities at Uluṟu. None of these additional recorded stories are allowed to be told. On one occasion, Cassidy Uluṟu, who works as a tour guide for Aṉangu Tours, told tourists the W*iyai Kutjara* story (the two boys). At the end of the tour he was informed by the white translator that even

though he is a traditional owner of Uluṟu, he is not allowed to tell that story. He consulted with the community council and complied with the instruction.

Tjukurpa is the guiding principle of the National Park to such an extent that white rangers leading the Mala Walk each day do not mention the geology of Uluṟu. As the Aboriginal explanation for the existence of Uluṟu is inconsistent with geological explanations, the geological explanation is eschewed. Any ranger who flaunts this is regarded with disdain by his colleagues. Interestingly, Leroy Lester, an Aṉangu ranger, *does* give a geological explanation of the area. In fact, it often appears that the white rangers are more concerned to promote *Tjukurpa* over geology than Aṉangu themselves. Despite eschewing geology, the National Park has World Heritage listings for both its unique geology and for Aboriginal culture, but geology is now no longer taught at the Tour Operators' Workshop.

It is my contention that there are sound political and ideological reasons behind the selection of the three *Tjukurpa* stories to be told to tourists, and the outlawing of other stories. It has been demonstrated earlier in this chapter how Aboriginal people have adhered to an ideology of an unchanging and immutable Dreaming, while living an experience of negotiation, fluidity and manipulation. In political encounters with Europeans, Aborigines have exhibited paintings and ritual objects to underline their identity and rightful possession of the land. These ideas are pertinent at Uluṟu.

It has been shown how knowledge of the Dreaming stories, in Aboriginal Law, is concomitant with ownership and responsibility for the land. Those who seek rights in a particular area of land are taught the associated stories and rituals. Unauthorised reproduction of sacred objects is

dangerous not just because ancestral power may be released, but because it implies improper appropriation of the land. Thus, possession of stories, paintings and ritual objects demonstrates possession of the land. With reference to the Kuniya and Liru, Lungkata, and Mala stories detailed above, the situation at Uluru can be seen as a political act: by demonstrating knowledge of the ancestors who bequeathed the land, Anangu are underlining their rightful ownership of the land. It has been stressed that Anangu want *Australians* to learn what the land means to them: the same Australians who funded a $300,000 campaign opposing the handback of Uluru. Uluru is Australia's major icon, the symbol of the outback, appropriated by whitefellas to illustrate *their* battle with an unforgiving terrain. Anangu use tourist visitation to reclaim Uluru for themselves, not just with the legal handback of title in 1985, but with the arrival of every single visitor to the National Park. The reinforcement of the fact that this is Anangu's rightful property is underlined with every movement the tourist makes.

As tourists enter the National Park, they are greeted firstly by a sign declaring in Pitjantjatjara and then English 'You are on Aboriginal Land'; as they pass through the entry station, another sign announces 'Welcome to Aboriginal Land'. At the entry station, the purchase of the required Park Entry ticket produces not only leaflets detailing the ownership of the Park and the wishes of its owners that people do not climb the rock; but the ticket itself offers a welcome from Anangu; bears a photograph of Kunbry Peipei, one of the traditional owners; and on its reverse sports one of Kunbry's paintings. This painting represents the movement of the characters in the *Tjukurpa*

stories converging on Uluṟu. The painting, and knowledge of the stories behind it, ratifies what the entry signs declare: this is Aboriginal land.

Those who progress straight to the Climb are once again told that they are on Aboriginal land. Signs at the base of the climb ask visitors to consider not climbing, as it is offensive to Aṉangu[17]. Those who adhere to Aṉangu wishes may take guided tours of Uluṟu, or guide themselves round the rock using booklets produced by the Park. Some may join the ranger-led Mala walk or decide to visit the Cultural Centre. In any event they will be introduced to the notion of *Tjukurpa*, and told at least one of the three permitted *Tjukurpa* stories. Every sign that the tourist encounters is written first in Pitjantjatjara, so in order to read the sign the visitor must study it to find his or her own language. The proliferation of Pitjantjatjara underlines the fact that the visitor is on Aboriginal land.

Why is it, then, that these three specific *Tjukurpa* stories have been selected, and the others not only neglected, but outlawed? It is my contention that if the stories are analysed they reveal certain similarities which I maintain distinguish the way that Aṉangu perceive their place in the world, and their encounters with Europeans.

All of the three permitted *Tjukurpa* stories have as their themes the wilful invasion of the land by ruthless intruders, theft and revenge. The invaders create havoc amongst the peaceful, rightful inhabitants, who then seek retribution. The parties coming into the land break the law, and are punished for it. The *Tjukurpa* stories do not only detail the correct rules for conduct between kin, or sharing meat and other resources with other groups;

they state explicitly what will happen to those who enter the land unlawfully and who show disrespect for the rightful inhabitants. In analysing the political motivations of these stories, I shall also present the meanings Anangu give for the stories. Riches (pers. comm.) has argued that the stories present a distinctively *Aboriginal* way of perceiving the land and its correct use, and that Anangu themselves do not announce the *Tjukurpa* stories as illustrative of relations with whites. However, I contend that *any* of the *Tjukurpa* stories (not just the three permitted stories) would demonstrate a specifically Aboriginal perception of the landscape, but that these three stories have been deliberated selected for display in a public place, and for promotion in public contexts. Further, in the Cultural Centre, the Aboriginal meanings of land use are not displayed: there is no analysis of the stories at all. Indeed, the Aboriginal purpose of the stories has predominantly been given to me in private conversations with Anangu. The point is that these stories have been selected for public consumption by whites, and all other stories are outlawed.

Taking the Kuniya story first, Kuniya is bringing her eggs to Uluru because she wants her children to be born here. As has already been pointed out, Aborigines claim rights to land where they were born, or where their parents were born. Layton (1983) writes that Pitjantjatjara people have a system of ambilineal descent, so they have the right to live in either their mother's or their father's land. Kuniya is bringing her eggs to Uluru because the ideal behaviour is to be born on the land of your parents. This is where she was born, and where she grew up, so it is right under the Law for her children to do likewise. So the story underlines the importance of holding the land

[17]The issue of the climb is the subject of the next chapter.

where you were born, so that its obligations and responsibilities may properly be transmitted to the next generation.

Kuniya deposits her eggs safely then is compelled to rush to the assistance of her nephew. Under the *Tjukurpa*, individuals must protect their kin. Once again this creates a network of rights and responsibilities that extends to providing land resources to kin who need them. Kuniya's nephew is killed, so it is her duty to avenge his death, which she does by slaying the Liru warrior who killed her nephew. Anangu have told me this is the main theme of this story: payback. What you do to me and mine, I will do to you and yours. But in avenging her nephew's death, Kuniya poisons the land by spitting onto it. This action may also highlight the necessity of asking before entering the land of another, for in asking permission to utilise resources, the elders could inform an incomer that fruits found in the Mutitjulu waterhole area are not to be eaten as they have been poisoned by Kuniya. Those who do not seek permission could eat the fruits in ignorance and be poisoned. Liru himself had unlawfully entered the land: he does not seek permission to enter the land, and his intention is to cause harm. Her anger abated, Kuniya takes her nephew's body onto the top of the rock, where they turn into Wanampi, the cantankerous water serpent. Once again, the story is illustrating the rule that one should die on one's own land, as that is where the spirit will return on death, and be reincarnated. To be able to die on your land, you must have access to it.[18]

[18] Peterson (1972) discusses how elderly Aborigines prefer to remain on their clan lands to ensure their spirit returns there on death, and to participate in clan rituals, which they direct.

The story proceeds. Wanampi, being the incarnation of Kuniya and her nephew, is the guardian of the waterhole. Anangu say that before entering the waterhole, one must announce one's presence. If a violent wind rises up, Wanampi is not content to let you take water from Mutitjulu waterhole, and you would be well advised to leave quickly. Once again this reflects on the ideal of asking before using resources that you do not control. Permission is rarely denied, but it should be sought. Those who just walk in and exploit the land of another will be dealt with harshly.

The Kuniya story therefore has a number of persistent themes: the obligation to look after one's country; the ideal of controlling the land where you are born and where your children belong; and concomitantly controlling the land where you should die; the notion of unlawfully entering the land, either to take resources or to cause trouble; protection of kin members; retribution for those who have been wronged; punishment for those who offend.

Turning to the story of Lungkata, at the start of the story he is burning the country, showing that he has a right to be in the area, as he is maintaining it according to Aboriginal law. Though he has a right to the land, once again we see an individual taking resources without having first asked for permission, not through evil or ignorance, but through sheer laziness. Lungkata knows the law, and that he should not take what is obviously someone else's meat (there's a spear sticking into the emu, marking it as belonging to another hunter). He disregards the law, not only in infringing it, but in refusing to be punished for his crime. To Anangu, meat is a precious resource, and for each meat there is a correct way to kill and cook it. For

example, kangaroo must not be portioned before cooking. Further, meat should be shared with other people, and none of it should be wasted.[19] Lungkaṯa has obviously broken all of these mores, as he steals a valuable resource, does not share it, and then drops parts of it on the ground in trying to effect his escape from punishment. He is given the opportunity to make restitution for his misdeeds, and uphold the *Tjukurpa*, but he refuses to do this, and so is killed for his crimes.[20]

Rupert Goodwin explained to me the difference between whitefella law and Aṉangu law, when he described what happened when he was speared for having sexual relations with a woman considered to be too young. He himself was considered too young to marry and look after her: Aṉangu men ideally marry in their thirties, when they are 'mature', and accomplished hunters capable of providing for a wife and family. Rupert explained, "When a whitefella does wrong, he runs away. The police chase him and he is dragged to his punishment. Blackfella way is different. You know you've done wrong and have to be punished. You walk to your punishment. I was speared. I walked to the tree and put my hands on it like this, then the girl's brothers and father pushed the spear through my thigh here. Then it's all over. A medicine woman chewed up leaves and spat them onto my leg, and it healed up."

The Mala story reflects these themes also. The Mala people are peaceful and law abiding. They have been away from their ritual areas as part of the process of moving to take advantage of resources in other areas, but they have returned to Uluṟu to perform their ceremonies and to initiate their

[19] Altman and Peterson (1988) also discuss the issue of how meat is distributed amongst kin, and compare this with distribution of cash and cash-bought commodities.

boys. They are living properly by keeping the sexes apart,[21] and they have a right to be there. However, the fact that they are asked to help the Wintalyka people shows that they have links to other, distant groups, possibly in the context of 'management' (see earlier discussion of Williams' notions of owners and managers). Under normal circumstances they would be obliged to help their distant kin, but the Mala people are part way through ceremonies which cannot be broken off. The Wintalyka people should have understood this, but instead they decide to wreak revenge by making and dispatching Kurpany. Possibly the Wintalyka people should also have been at Uluṟu, in the capacity of managers to the Mala people, in a symbiotic relationship. The Mala story is ambiguous, though, as two of the Mala men are killed, and Kurpany is not destroyed until later in the story when the adventures have led them down into South Australia. Possibly, the Mala men did deserve punishment for not coming to the assistance of the Wintalyka people, but the unreasonableness in constructing Kurpany is avenged eventually. However, the story does highlight the associations between very distant groups, not only in the fact that the Wintalyka people call on the Mala people for help; but that in a contemporary setting the story is owned by a number of different groups along the same Dreaming track. As has already been discussed, those who share a Dreaming track perceive of a link between their lands, and obligations towards each other. The Mala story illustrates this.

[20]The Lungkaṯa story was subject to further elaboration and manipulation in relation to the climb at Uluṟu. This will be discussed in the following chapter.
[21]This was discussed in the previous chapter with the benefits of the new boarding school at Yulara, and educating the sexes separately. Rupert has stated that the rightfulness of keeping the sexes apart is known to Aṉangu through the Mala story.

The analysed *Tjukurpa* stories have the overriding themes of unlawful intruders, those who enter the land and kill and steal, and their eventual violent death. It is my contention that these stories have been selected purposely in the context of interaction between Anangu and tourists, simply because they illustrate these themes. Thus, the *Tjukurpa* stories demonstrate the way Anangu perceive their land: something to protect and maintain, but also something which has been subject to intruders who have committed murder, rape, theft, dislocation and exploitation.[22] There is a spiritual continuity between the past and the present . It can be seen that the *Tjukurpa* itself is not simply concerned with the past, but determines the future. As Stanner (1965) says, Dreaming describes what constitutes good and bad behaviour, and the consequences of both. The *Tjukurpa* stories show what has happened when the Law has been broken in the past, *and what will happen if it is broken in the future.* Thus the implicit message to the 350,000 tourists who come to Uluru each year is: break our Law, disrespect our land, hurt our bodies, steal what is rightfully ours, and you will die. The ancestors have decreed it.[23]

It can also be seen that Anangu have demonstrated an understanding of tourist interests when they come to Uluru. Often Anangu express irritation

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[22]In other parts of Australia, myths have similarly been subject to reinterpretation. Kolig (1981) discusses the story of Noah's Ark which is reformulated by Aborigines in the Kimberleys region to incorporate their own Dreaming characters and to assert that the flood came to destroy evil white people.

[23] Rowse discusses Aboriginal stories about Captain Cook, and how such 'contact' stories display recurrent themes of non-reciprocity between Aborigines and colonialists, demonstrating the subversion of the traditional rule of reciprocity. He quotes Rose who explains that Aborigines did not expect such aberrations to then become the basis for law. Aboriginal 'contact' stories are not necessarily critical of colonialists: Rowse also discusses the work of William McGregor in analysing Aboriginal 'police tracker' stories. McGregor argues that the stories contain implicit morals, and the crucial event in each story is the

with tourists who just take photographs, without understanding Uluṟu. However, the three *Tjukurpa* stories focus on Uluṟu itself: though the characters may come to the rock from other areas, there is little action away from Uluṟu itself. For example, the stories do not mention Kurpany's footprints out in the open desert. Of course, for Aṉangu, the pertinent aspect is the return of the land, the whole area, not just Uluṟu; the whole of the surrounding area is important in the *Tjukurpa*. Tourists are predominantly incapable of apprehending this distinction, and Aṉangu have therefore pertinently concentrated on the visible symbol of their identity as Aṉangu, that recognised by the very people they want to address with their message of legal, spiritual and rightful ownership of the rock.

I think it is pertinent to mention that the three stories were selected when the Cultural Centre was being built and opened, to commemorate ten years of the handback of the land to the traditional owners. Handback was accompanied by violent opposition from individuals, the Northern Territory government, and the National Party who tried to claim that Uluṟu was for 'all Australians' and insinuated that Aṉangu were unfit to hold the land legally. Prior to handback, Aṉangu suffered a contact history of removal from their lands, enslavement, massacre, disease, and the forcible removal of children during the 'stolen generation' years. Ten years after overcoming all the opposition, hostility and outright racism, is it any wonder that that the T-shirt handed out free to all those who attended the opening of the Cultural Centre

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rightful punishment of those being pursued by the police and the trackers. The white institution of the police powerfully enforces morality (Rowse 1993: 14f).

bore a drawing of Uluṟu and the slogan 'Nganampalampa: Ours. All Ours. Definitely All Ours'.

Conclusion

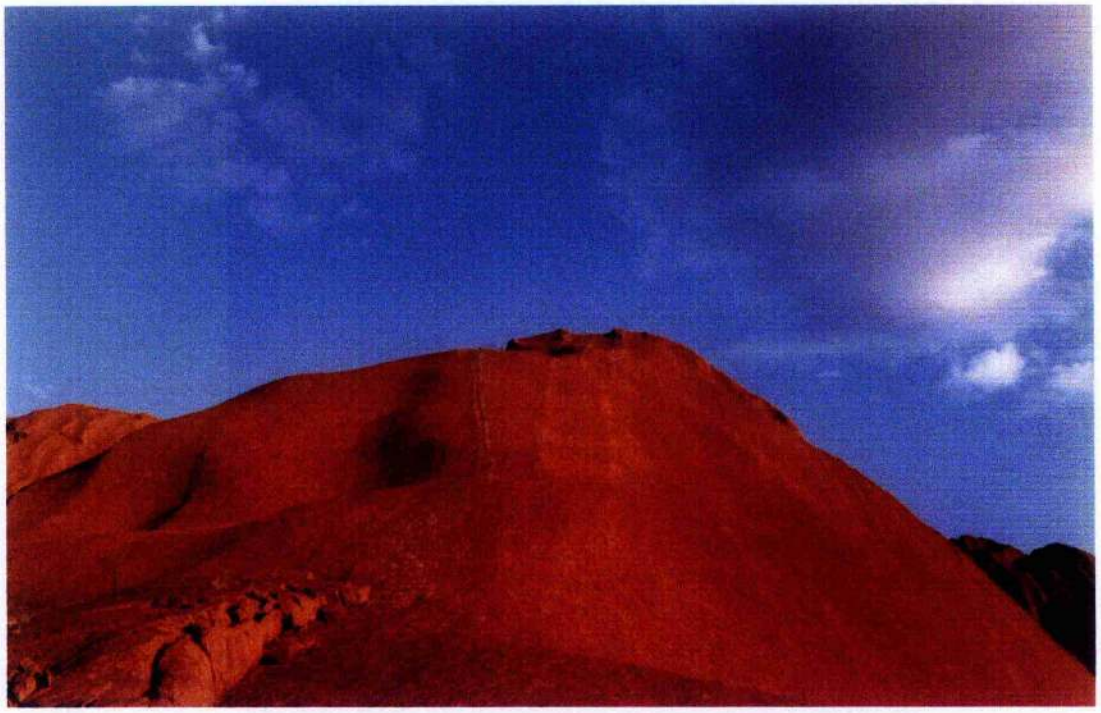
This chapter has demonstrated the way the Dreaming is a prescription for life: it lays down rules for the correct conduct in all aspects of Aboriginal life. Aṉangu being traditionally a hunter-gatherer people, it is logical that the Dreaming is perceived as pertaining particularly to land use and ownership, and the movement of the ancestors across the landscape. Initially analysed by anthropologists as unchanging, later writers have demonstrated the way the Dreaming is actually highly manipulable, while yet retaining an ideology of immutability. The inherent flexibility of the Dreaming is an adaptive strategy which also functions to maintain Aboriginal identity in a post-contact situation. Writers have discussed the notion of land ownership amongst Aboriginal people. All writers are agreed that land was not 'bounded' and 'owned' in the Western sense, but they differ to the extent they believe land owning deviates from Western notions of land ownership. Some writers see land as conceptually bounded, and the responsibility of a defined group. Others emphasise the fluidity of movement between groups, and the way individuals may claim land in other areas by manipulating and emphasising numerous kinship, ritual and Dreaming links. It might be anticipated that in those areas of Australia with plentiful resources (e.g. on the coastal regions) the land is more rigorously defended and clan estates are bounded, whereas this cannot hold for the arid centre, purely for reasons of ecology and survival. However, this appears not to be the case: the Aranda of Central Australia

defend their land rigorously, despite the ecological marginality of the resources; whereas the Yolngu, in the Arnhem Land area of the Northern Territory with prolific land and sea resources, have fluid and negotiable land holding systems.

The situation at Uluṟu reflects and exemplifies these processes of land holding and the manipulability of the Dreaming. Aṉangu have experienced a post contact history of white intrusion, loss of their land, introduced diseases and slavery. With the advent of tourism, they found they had no control over the movements of tourists, who could enter and photograph the sacred sites. A first attempt to claim back their land in 1978 was initially rejected, and it was only a change of government that enabled the traditional owners of Uluṟu to claim legal title to their land. Having secured their land amidst furious racism, Aṉangu have used the *Tjukurpa* to underline the rightfulness of their having legal title, and to exemplify it to those who would forcibly challenge their legal role. They highlight their ownership of the land using methods familiar to Aborigines: knowledge of the *Tjukurpa* and paintings. The underlying themes of the *Tjukurpa* stories are perfectly evident to Aṉangu, even if they are not so apparent to tourists. To illustrate the rightfulness of their title, Aṉangu have selected three of their *Tjukurpa* stories which illustrate not only that they own the land as a concomitant to owning the stories; but also that the area has an ancestral history of invasion and disruption, but that such unlawful behaviour is always avenged. These stories are prescribed to the exclusion of all others, and tour guides are informed that they *must* tell these stories. Further, the building of the Cultural Centre, the implementation of signage in the Park and the development of the Tour Operators' Workshop all work to

highlight the position of Anangu as the owners of Uluru, as decreed during the *Tjukurpa*.

In the next chapter we will examine the way the *Tjukurpa* stories have been modified, and unified into a single message that underpins a distinctive, public Anangu identity.



The Climb

Desert Oak

Chapter Four: *Nganana tatintja wiya*[1]

"That's a really important sacred thing that you are climbing. You shouldn't climb. It's not the real thing about this place. The real thing is listening to everything. Listening and understanding everything. When we say don't climb, maybe that makes you a bit sad. But anyway, that's what we have to say. We are obliged to say." Tony Tjamiwa (message situated in the Cultural Centre requesting that tourists do not climb Uluṟu.)

Uluṟu rises to a height of 348 metres, its sides at an angle of 80 degrees to the plain. The site of the climb is the only place where it is possible to climb Uluṟu, because the side slopes more gently. Even so, the climb is not an easy option: there is a chain erected on the side of Uluṟu to help climbers over the steepest parts of the climb; the path is smooth and slippery; and it is incredibly windy. Further, the sides of Uluṟu are corrugated, so the climb undulates, and at times the path veers alarmingly close to the edge of the rock. At the base of the climb are brass plaques marking the deaths of some tourists on the rock during the 1960s and 70s. Huge signs at the base of the climb warn tourists that climbing is extremely dangerous, and that those with heart and chest complaints, a fear of heights, the unfit or overweight should not attempt the climb. Those who insist on climbing are told to carry water, to rest frequently, and to allow at least two hours to complete the climb. Even so, there is on average one death on the rock each year, there were five during the two years I

[1]We don't climb: message on signs at the foot of the climb at Uluṟu, on a huge panel display in the Cultural Centre, and on T-shirts for sale in the Cultural Centre.
An earlier draft of this chapter was presented at the University of Durham anthropology seminar in January 1999, and has benefited greatly from the comments and criticism offered by the participants.

was there, and there are many other deaths through strokes and heart attacks that are attributed to over-exertion on the climb.

The first whitefella to climb Uluṟu was the explorer Gosse. Later travellers Breaden and Oliver followed suit in 1897, carving their names in Uluṟu's hard sandstone surface. Climbing as a tourist activity started approximately fifty years ago, and now it is the stated intention of 70% of all tourists to 'conquer' Uluṟu. In actuality only 45% do so, making nearly 160,000 visitors streaming up the steep side of Uluṟu every year. However, climbing is offensive to Aṉangu. This chapter will examine how Aṉangu's anti-climb message has become rapidly more strident; and is now used as a political statement of identity in interactions with whites. I will discuss whether one should regard not climbing as, to a certain extent, an invented tradition, only partly articulated by Aṉangu themselves. Further, for many tourists the climb is an area to stake an identity. In short, the climb is a locus of competing interests for the National Park, with the result that the climb issue is many layered, textured, confusing and antagonistic.

Aṉangu

According to the *Tjukurpa*, the site of the climb is the same route taken by the Mala men during their ceremonies, when they carried a *Ngaḷtawaṭa* (ceremonial pole) up to the top of Uluṟu. Only certain Aṉangu men are permitted to climb the rock, during rituals when they recreate the actions of their Mala ancestors. For tourists to climb the rock is sacrilege. Paddy Uluṟu articulated Aṉangu opposition to tourists climbing Uluṟu in 1971, "Ayers Rock is holy. I am Ayers Rock, and these things are mine. And now white

people have broken that which is ours, our law, ours, our great ceremony, the ceremony of the Mala wallaby from which we are taught" (quoted in Muncie 1993). It can be argued that Anangu have always been opposed to the notion of tourists climbing Uluru, but the militancy of their message has dramatically increased. White locals in the area prior to handback have told me how Anangu used to sit at the base of the climb and watch the tourists climbing: they found it amusing to see them scrambling up the side of the rock. Anangu also had an arts and crafts tent at the base of the climb, to vend artefacts to tourists, and some Anangu ran a mobile coca cola outlet at the base of the climb, gaining an income from the sale of cold drinks, snacks and T-shirts to tourists who had climbed (CLC *et al* 1991). When the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Australia in 1981, Prince Charles climbed Uluru and signed his name in the visitors' book at the top, after the traditional owners of Uluru wished him luck and waved him off as he commenced his climb!

At handback, in 1985, Yami Lester, the first chairman of the Board of Management, and an Aboriginal spokesman, stated that Anangu were unhappy about tourists climbing Uluru, but that the climb as an activity had existed for some time and Anangu were not planning to prevent it. That Anangu were not overly concerned by tourists climbing Uluru can be demonstrated by the fact that there is no mention of Anangu sensibilities regarding the climb in the 1991 Plan of Management, though it states explicitly that *Tjukurpa* is the guiding principle for Park management (ANPWS 1991). Indeed, under the terms of the leaseback arrangement, it is possible for Anangu to close the climb, indeed the entire Park, any time they wish. Further, the first tour operators' workshop, run by the Park in 1992, included a ranger-led climb.

Newspaper reports and travel writing from 1993 begin to mention Anangu opinions of the climb, but often conclude with the author stating he climbed anyway, as climbing is a 'must do' activity. In other words, it is inconceivable to consider visiting Uluru and not climb it. But when I arrived in the field in September 1996, the message about not climbing the rock was in guide books, newspaper articles and travel magazines; and there were rumours being circulated from South Australia and Sydney that the climb would be closed after the Olympics in the year 2000.

However, whitefellas who had worked with Anangu for several years told me that Anangu did not really care whether people climbed the rock or not. Initially, my field experience bore this out. When a Japanese tourist died on Uluru in November 1996, the sentiment in the Mutitjulu community was one of grief for his family, and concern for the rescue staff who took three days to retrieve his body, not expressions of obeying the *Tjukurpa*. At that time, the anti-climb message itself was more about the safety of the tourists and less about the notions of sacrilege. At the Tour Operators' Workshop in March 1997, Tjamiwa welcomed all of the participants and told them they had an important job to do, warning tourists of the dangers of climbing. He said, "That rock is dangerous. People fall off, and their parents are a long way away. They're sad. Anangu are also sad because they feel responsible. People fall off the rock and get mangled. If Anangu climbed and hurt themselves, I could be hurt because I'm responsible as a traditional owner."

On Anangu-led walks and tours, their message concerning the climb was similarly one of safety and responsibility. Notably Anangu did not mention the issue of the climb in private conversations. On only two occasions

did Anangu mention their feelings over the climb to me in a private setting. The first mention of the climb occurred at a barbecue party in August 1997, after three deaths on Uluru in ten months. Andrew Uluru expressed his concerns to me. "This is my country. I love my country. I've got to look after it and tell tourists about it. And I've got to look after the people who visit my country. If I visited your country you'd look after me, wouldn't you? Because it's your country, you'd look after me. You're on my country, now I look after you. That rock, it kills people. They go up there and roll down. I work for Anangu Tours, and I tell people, that rock kills people." Then he added, "The rock is angry. It kills people."

Andrew's comments reflect two concerns with the climb. Firstly, the climb is a dangerous activity, and he as a traditional owner is responsible for the well being of people coming onto his land. Secondly, Andrew expresses the opinion that the rock is angry with all the people climbing on it, and that is why it kills them.

There was only one other occasion when Anangu expressed a private opinion on the climb. I was interviewing tourists at the base of the climb, and Rupert very angrily asked if I was going to climb Uluru. When I denied this vehemently, and showed him my questionnaires, explaining I was talking to the *minga* (tourists), he relaxed and said "That's good". But I'm unsure whether his anger was at concern for my safety, or a perceived insult to his culture from someone he had grown to know as a friend.

During 1997 there were several workshops for Anangu and rangers to discuss what should be included in the latest Plan of Management for the National Park. Anangu were encouraged to draw pictures and express freely

the concerns they had over the running of the Park, and how they saw their role in the Park and the maintenance of their traditional lands. Anangu voiced various concerns, including re-siting the ring road round Uluru to avoid women's sacred sites, especially *Pulari*; the importance of teaching rangers how to clear waterholes; burning the country; making a secure future for their children; tourists taking photographs and graffiti. *There was no mention of the climb whatsoever.*

Although private manifestations of the anti-climb message were rare, from 1995 onwards the public promotion of the message underwent a dramatic reinforcement. Various reasons for opposing the climb were voiced in interactions with tourists, the Cultural Centre displayed huge information boards bearing impassioned pleas from Anangu that tourists do not climb the rock, the anti-climb message was a feature of all media interviews with Anangu, and every Yulara hotel room was equipped with a leaflet detailing the dangers of climbing and the religious beliefs of the traditional owners. The anti-climb message was assisted somewhat by the number of deaths that occurred on Uluru (five during the two years that I was in the field), which brought even more media attention to the area. Further, the coronial enquiry into three deaths on the rock requested that the dangers of climbing Uluru be made more explicit. The anti-climb wishes of Anangu were printed in travel brochures, guide books and travel writing.

By April 1998, Anangu working for Anangu Tours on their Kuniya Tour were taking the opportunity to elaborate on the anti-climb message. Karina Lester explained, "You don't need to climb the rock to see what's out in the countryside as the *Tjukurpa* stories give you a map". At Mutitjulu

waterhole it was pointed out that Anangu used to drink the water there, but people climbing the rock have soiled the water so now it is undrinkable. The explanation went thus, "People climb up and disturb the surface of the rock and drop things which all get washed down into the waterhole. So now the water isn't pure anymore." Here we can see a very definite public statement of not climbing the rock, not for reasons of safety, but because it soils the waterhole. Further, it was pointed out, "Coming here and climbing the rock is like visiting someone and staying out all the time. You're on our land so you should learn something about us."

The most dramatic manifestation of the anti-climb message was when one of the *Tjukurpa* stories was changed to incorporate it. Previous studies of Dreaming have either argued that it is fixed and unchanging (Stanner 1965) or has an ideology of immutability but in practice is highly manipulable (Myers 1991). My experience at Uluru was that it was not simply that the details or events in the story were modified, *but the stated meaning behind it was altered.* The story in question was that of Lungkata, the sleepy lizard. When I arrived at Uluru, Anangu told me the meaning of the story was the correct treatment of meat. The story shows that you should not steal or lie, and if you do, you must face punishment or you will die. The stealing of another hunter's meat highlights the ideology of sharing: a hunter will distribute meat amongst a number of people. Meat is a valuable resource, and so should be shared with many, and it must not be wasted. Thus, Lungkata has infringed two social mores by not only stealing the meat for himself, but wasting it by dropping it on the ground. This meaning of the story was expressed on a number of occasions: when Anangu taught me the stories alone, and when they related

them to tourists on public tours. However, in January 1998, the purported meaning of the Lungkaṯa story, as related to tourists, had changed. It was announced that the meaning of the story was specifically about the dangers of climbing Uluṟu! Lungkaṯa steals the meat, climbs up the rock to hide in a cave, then is killed. It can be seen that this adaptation meshes with the way the other *Tjukurpa* stories reflect Aṉangu interaction with whites as discussed in the previous chapter: steal ... climb ... die. White people stole the rock, forcibly moving the traditional owners hundreds of kilometres away from their land, then hundreds of thousands of tourists have climbed the rock, and a number of them have died in the process. But the death of Lungkaṯa after climbing Uluṟu reflects not just the actual deaths on the rock, but the metaphorical death of white supremacy that will come eventually, when all wrongs will be avenged, and the proper order restored by Aṉangu.

On his Mala walk, the ranger Rupert Goodwin gave a detailed and impassioned reason why Aṉangu prefer tourists not to climb Uluṟu. "If people come here and climb the rock, and they die, their spirit stays here. Their parents are sad because the person has died a long way away, and all they get is an empty body. They don't have the spirit of the person with them, and that makes them sad. The spirit is here, but it doesn't belong here. It doesn't know where it is, a long way from home. And the parents far away have nothing."

It can be seen that Rupert's interpretation of the anti-climb message is a question both of safety *and* belonging. Notions of spirituality are now fully incorporated into the anti-climb message. The ideal behaviour is to die on your clan lands, not far away in a foreign place, because your spirit needs to return to the land it came from. Thus to die on Uluṟu is to leave a lost spirit, and to

reduce the life-giving essence available for the future promotion of your people. This idea can also be linked to the Lungkaṯa progression of steal, climb, die: the death is not only physical but also spiritual and a betrayal of family and familial continuity.

The anti-climb message has also been promoted using huge display boards at the Cultural Centre, on signs at the base of the climb, and in the sale of T-shirts bearing the slogan '*Nganaṉa tatintja wiya*' (We don't climb). There has been a heightened awareness of Aṉangu sensibilities in the press, and travel writers who mention it now mostly do not then confess to having found the climb irresistible despite Aṉangu beliefs. Alternatives to the climb were a major consideration of the Visitor Management Strategy.[2]

It can be argued that the development of the anti-climb message from 1995 onwards was possible through a deepening security for Aṉangu in the control of their land. Prior to handback they had very little control over visitor activity, to the extent that tourists could, and did, clamber over and photograph sacred sites. Once handback was secured, it was amidst such violent opposition that to voice concerns over the climb would have created an immediate political backlash against Aboriginal people generally, and the land rights legislation. However, by the time of the tenth anniversary of handback, Aṉangu participation in Park management had increased, the Cultural Centre had been built, and joint management acknowledged Aṉangu sensitivities

[2] The anti-climb message was given additional impetus in January 1999, when Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer announced he regretted having climbed Uluṟu thirty years previously. His announcement received massive media publicity, and the Park used the opportunity to underline the anti-climb message. However, Eilleen Hoosan, of the Yankunytjatjara Kuta Association claimed that the climb was not, and never had been an issue with traditional owners, but that they were concerned over tourists' safety (*Sunday Territorian*, January 17th, 1999).

towards their land. All of the sacred sites had been fenced and protected, so it was possible to attend to the less pressing issue of the climb. Opposition to Aboriginal ownership of Uluṟu had abated, and so Aṉangu were able to voice their concerns over climbing in a public sphere. Their message became more forceful and impassioned. In contrast to Yami Lester's public statement in 1985 that Aṉangu were not pleased by climbing, but would tolerate the activity, the anti-climb message now articulates concerns over safety, responsibility, pollution, etiquette and religion. The message of not climbing the rock has become a feature of all public interactions, and is so important that one of the *Tjukurpa* stories has changed to accommodate it. As Aṉangu have always been opposed to people climbing Uluṟu, this hardening of the anti-climb message is not so much an invention of tradition as a reappraisal of tradition: casting the anti-climb idea back into the mythical past.

Before I elaborate on these ideas, I will offer a critique of Hobsbawm and Ranger's notion of 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992). 'Invented tradition' is defined by them as a historically recently emerged 'set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past' (1992: 1). The traditions may be easily identified as invented, or they may develop in a less overt way, yet quickly become established. Typically, invented traditions emerge to fill the spaces left when old traditions have died out, and occur when the society in question has undergone extreme, rapid changes. This accounts for the number of invented traditions developed in the nineteenth century in countries undergoing industrial revolution. The invented

tradition may draw on symbols or practices from the past to ascribe a long history to the practice, and thereby legitimise it. It may also promote a sense of superiority amongst elites: especially amongst those who have been promoted to their position rather than acquiring it through birth. Though the practice of the tradition may be rigidly prescribed, the emotions surrounding the tradition may be vague. Hobsbawm and Ranger give examples of such emotions as 'the school spirit' and 'patriotism' (1992: 10). In the essays in the book which follow Hobsbawm and Ranger's definitional introduction, it can also be seen that often invented traditions are imposed from outside the society in question, for example the introduction of kilts to the Scottish Highlands by an English industrialist. In fact, in their introduction, Hobsbawm and Ranger assert that these are the easiest inventions to trace: imposed as they are by a single person or group, rather than those inventions that emerge informally.

As nineteenth century industrial nations were so fertile for invented traditions, Hobsbawm and Ranger concentrate upon them, and this possibly accounts for the unsatisfactory distinction they draw between 'tradition' and 'custom'. Indeed, I would question how useful these terms are for discussing societies other than industrialised nations. 'Tradition' (invented or genuine) is characterised by its invariance (p.2). By contrast, Hobsbawm and Ranger acknowledge the flexibility of 'customs', and argue that they must be so, as society itself is changeable. However, later in their introduction, they assert the 'strength and adaptability of genuine traditions' (p.8). It may be easy, in analysing the components of a legal system in an industrialised nation, to separate the 'custom' of the common law from the 'tradition' of the lawyers' wigs and gowns, but I contend that this separation of tradition and custom is

unsatisfactory when applied to non-industrial societies. For example, can the rules of *Tjukurpa* be described adequately as custom or tradition? As seen in the previous chapter, *Tjukurpa* determines all aspects of Aṉangu life. For example, the correct way to kill a kangaroo (by spearing, then throw rocks at it) was instituted during the *Tjukurpa*, as it was the way kangaroos were killed by the ancestors. If questioned, Aṉangu will say that is the only way to kill a kangaroo: thus it would appear to be a tradition: invariable and reinforced by repetition, legitimated by reference to the past. However, Aṉangu today would not kill a kangaroo by spearing, they use a rifle: a more effective way of hunting. In this respect, it would appear to be a custom: adaptable to the changes imposed on a society. As even Hobsbawm and Ranger cannot agree as to whether a tradition is adaptive or rigidly invariable, I think the distinction between it and custom is of limited application.

However, despite this caveat, I feel that the notion of an 'invented tradition' may be a useful tool to examine the situation pertaining at Uluṟu with respect to the climb, if used with circumspection. Firstly, this thesis has already discussed the dramatic dislocation that Aṉangu society has undergone in the past century. Hobsbawm and Ranger write that one should expect the emergence of invented traditions 'when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which "old" traditions had been designed' (p.4). However, far from old traditions being destroyed, despite the extreme intervention suffered at the hands of whites, Aṉangu traditions have remained remarkably adaptable and resilient. Secondly, in the face of this rapid cultural change, it is expected that the past will be increasingly less relevant; so when old traditions die out, they may not be replaced. But again,

we can see that this is not the case with Anangu, who continue to assert the relevance of *Tjukurpa* to their modern day lives.

Turning to the climb, it may be questioned whether the absence of behaviour can properly be called a tradition. Typically, 'tradition' refers to actions, reinforced by repetition; not the absence of a certain action. For uninitiated Anangu, climbing the rock would be wholly inappropriate, not a behaviour they wished to indulge in but which was tabooed. It was only when tourists undertook this inappropriate behaviour that Anangu were compelled to publicise their attitudes towards the climb. The 'invented tradition' notion rings true when *Tjukurpa* is invoked to authorise the anti-climb prohibitions: ascribing to it a history that dates back to when the world began. It can be seen that this also accords with Fred Myers' discussion of Dreaming as an external authority that is beyond interrogation (1991: *passim*). The issue of *tourists* climbing Uluru can be seen to be a recent occurrence, as tourism in the area only started in the 1950s. Thus the prohibition does appear to be an invention created in response to the situation of mass tourism at Uluru. Hobsbawm and Ranger also argue that invented traditions frequently become the 'actual symbol of struggle' (p.12). This idea is certainly pertinent at Uluru, where it would appear that Anangu have taken the focal point of tourism at Uluru, and used it to force a consideration of their attitudes towards the land and their place in its maintenance. From the standpoint of the late 1990s, the anti-climb message is not a complete invention: certainly since 1985 Anangu have expressed concern over the climb, but since the early 1990s their message about not climbing has become more militant. Again echoing Hobsbawm and Ranger, the issue of climbing was initially much more important to the white

rangers, who saw in it a way of marking difference between Anangu (and those sensitive to Aboriginal culture) and tourists (whom both Anangu and rangers predominantly despise). Anangu recognised the potency of this message as an identity marker for themselves, and the efficacy of the message, pertaining as it does to the primary activity of visitors to the rock. The attitudes of tourists towards the climb can also be usefully analysed using Hobsbawm and Ranger's ideas: they describe invented traditions as 'unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate' (p.10) and that though the actions may be prescribed, the associated emotions are unfixed. This holds for the issue of the Uluru climb: tourists who eschew the climb follow prescribed behaviour (not climbing) but the emotions engendered are vague, pertaining to political correctness and respect for indigenous people.[3]

In summary, it can be seen that in some respects, the anti-climb message is an 'invented tradition': it is ratified by appealing to history, the militancy of the message was imposed on Anangu by white rangers attempting to ascribe a sense of superiority for themselves as guardians of Aboriginal culture, and the message is in response to a recent social change (mass tourism). However, it can also be seen that Anangu have always expressed their opposition to the climb, but that in past years their ability, as a marginalised people, to gain respect for their beliefs was circumscribed. Thus, I feel that the anti-climb message cannot fully be interpreted as an invented tradition in the Hobsbawm and Ranger sense, but is more appropriately

[3]It can be seen that not climbing inspires vague emotions, whereas climbing results in definite emotional reactions such as pride, achievement or courage.

understood as an astute response to a changing political and social environment. It is more profitably understood as a reinterpretation of *Tjukurpa* to accommodate a new situation.

In the Huxley Lecture, 1998, Sahlins questions the notion of 'invention of tradition' and is critical of anthropological analyses which show empirically that customs are historically recent, and therefore in someway inauthentic. He compares this approach with earlier ethnographies which also recognised that no culture was bounded and self-contained, and documented the adoption of other societies' customs, but without subjecting the practitioners to censure. Sahlins discusses Malinowski's presentation of Trobriand mythology which functions to legitimate the claims of ruling clans, yet 'no-one thought to debunk these traditions or reproach the people for fabricating them'. He demonstrates how invented traditions are often presented as inversions of aspects of white culture, and can be seen as 'proxy criticisms of Western society'. He analyses Japanese sumo wrestling, portrayed as the national sport, and traces its installation to 1911. However, sumo incorporates aspects of divine mythology, adapted to a modern setting. Sahlins argues that cultural adaptation to new situations is a feature of all societies, and so it may be more appropriate to talk of 'the inventedness of tradition' rather than the 'invention of tradition', and that perhaps a more interesting line of inquiry is why only certain customs are selected and exhalted to the status of national emblem (Sahlins, forthcoming).

The notion of 'inventedness of traditions', in Aboriginal society and the question of reinterpreting traditional stories, with concomitant elaboration and discovery of sacred sites has been a matter of debate amongst

anthropologists working in other parts of Australia, as exemplified by the cases of Coronation Hill and Hindmarsh Bridge. In these instances, too, there was a reworking of the past, by both anthropologists and Aborigines.

The Coronation Hill debate concerned a proposed mining venture in the Top End of the Northern Territory. The area was registered as a sacred site in 1985, it being claimed that the site was a 'sickness country', i.e. that if mining continued the disruption to the ancestors would wreak havoc on the entire country and overseas. Mining ceased until 1986, then after mediation between Aboriginal custodians and the mining companies was permitted to resume. The debate concerned the fact that various reporters claimed that Coronation Hill as a sacred site was a fabrication, that in fact it was merely a men's ceremonial area. Further, that since the *Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1978*, it was possible for vindictive Aborigines to bring to a halt any economic venture they wished (Maddock 1988).[4] Research into the veracity of these claims was undertaken by several parties and revealed dissent amongst the Aboriginal people themselves, and one report denied any Aboriginal association with the area whatsoever. Eventually, mining was banned at Coronation Hill in 1991, and the area has been included in Kakadu National Park (Merlan 1991).

The case of Hindmarsh Bridge differed from that of Coronation Hill in that the protagonists and antagonists were Aboriginal people themselves. It was proposed to build a bridge from the mainland to Hindmarsh Island in

[4] The media attributed similar motivations to Aborigines opposing mining at P-Hill in the west Kimberleys. In this instance they opposed drilling for oil and iron ore 3.5 kms away from an important site, on the grounds that mining would release spiritual energy held in the rocks, and would disrupt the area's fertility. The government allowed drilling to continue (Kolig 1988: 132-146).

South Australia. The traditional Aboriginal inhabitants of this area are Ngarrindjeri. A group of Ngarrindjeri women attempted to halt construction of the bridge as they claimed Hindmarsh Island was the site of important 'women's business', and that if the bridge were built it would affect the women's fertility. In 1994 the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs banned the building of the bridge for twenty-five years. However, another group of Ngarrindjeri women claimed that this 'women's business' was invented, and that they had no knowledge of women's association with Hindmarsh Island. A Royal Commission was convened, which overturned the Minister's decision in 1995, and allowed construction of the bridge to go ahead (Weiner 1995).

These debates have highlighted and brought into question various anthropological practices, and led to a reassessment of the nature of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture. Brunton (1996) was concerned with the practice of anthropologists believing anything that informants chose to tell them, questioning the integrity of the profession. He recognises the malleability of cultural practices within an ideology of denial of change, but equates cultural change with cultural loss. Merlan (1991) criticises Brunton for assuming that cultural change necessarily means cultural loss, and sees in the Coronation Hill debate an example of Aboriginal cultural adaptability and survival in the face of new interventions. She argues that the Coronation Hill debate demonstrates the change in black-white relations over the past 120 years. The 'sickness' that will be released by mining will affect Sydney, Melbourne and overseas: a reworking of Aboriginal eschatology to encompass engagement with whites. She writes that the issues over protection of sites used to be purely religious, now they have taken on political overtones.

Merlan writes that as Aboriginal rights have become legislation, so they are brought into the public and political spheres, a move away from the purely religious spheres of traditional life (1991). Weiner (1995) develops this idea by showing that the Aboriginal norm was to conceal knowledge, as knowledge is power, and authority was obtained through the unequal distribution of sacred knowledge. Aborigines used to demonstrate awareness of the knowledge rather than the knowledge itself.[5] He argues that any development site can become a focus for concerns because it provides an arena in which to assert identity, responsibility and authority (1997).

The use of the past to legitimate contemporary statuses is discussed by several writers. The past may be reconstructed to validate claims of authenticity or identity. Beckett (1988) describes the way in which Aborigines select from the past to assert a distinctive, authentic identity. Although Aboriginal knowledge is based on the past, it may also incorporate ideas from the present (Creamer 1988), and the past may be idealised (Archer 1991). These ideas have already been encountered in our examination of the *Tjukurpa* stories, and how they are promoted to add validity to Aboriginal claims of rightful ownership of the land. In selecting from the past to underpin current contests, Aboriginal society has also been recognised as highly adaptive. Creamer writes that Aboriginal identity may be 'constructed' in political or economic struggles (1988); and Cowlishaw sees Aboriginal culture as 'a

[5] Weiner (1999) writes that codification of Aboriginal sacred material is problematic. He says, 'One of the main points of contention ... is the legal provision for the protection of knowledge that is deemed sensitive, restricted or confidential by its Aboriginal holders. Their dilemma is that in order to secure site protection, they must divulge knowledge to those who should not, in Aboriginal terms, receive it.' He also points out that in collecting information from many informants during the course of a claim, the anthropologist may eventually know more sacred material than the Aboriginal group themselves.

creative response to conditions of existence' (1988). Cultural traditions themselves may be shaped by historical circumstances, revealing the strength of the culture to incorporate and withstand outside interference (Smith 1990: 179). Lewins (1991) argues that Aborigines manipulate a 'public ethnicity' for their own political ends, and he describes Aboriginality as a process, unfixed: a cultural response to a political environment.

Jacobs (1988) demonstrates how the public manipulation of 'Aboriginality' may have decisive results in land claims. She describes how Aboriginal groups that present themselves as conforming to the more 'traditional' stereotype are more successful in land claims cases. Her argument is that the Australian government is anxious to identify distinctive cultural groups in order to legitimate their specialised treatment of them. Thus, urban Aborigines have been perceived as 'non-traditional' and have been unsuccessful in land claims, even though they have a strong attachment to the land, and a definite sense of Aboriginality. Aborigines have become aware of the bias towards those perceived as conforming to the 'traditional' stereotype, and so have manipulated their image accordingly, ensuring many elders attend land claims meetings, and having an initiated man as their chairman. Jacobs writes that the elders do not even have to address the meetings: simply their presence wearing traditional headbands is enough to assert a traditional identity. In this instance it can be seen that the Australian government has looked to the past for confirmation of Aboriginality, and apprehending this, Aborigines have complied in order to ensure their success in land struggles.[6]

[6] This Aboriginal appreciation of the way their culture is perceived and understood by whites has been documented for situations other than land claims. Rose discusses the case of a murder which occurred during her fieldwork at Victoria River Downs in the Northern

Weiner has criticised the framing of Aboriginal land rights and heritage legislation, as although it assists Aboriginal communities which are recognisably 'traditional' it is problematic for more settled communities, or those which have lost their traditional language, customs, land and mythology. He argues that Aboriginal Heritage protection legislation fails to distinguish between 'demonstrable and continuing ritual and religious actions and practices' and 'a resurrection of tradition, which while still valid and authentic as a sociocultural phenomenon, is rather differently situated conventionally'. Typically during the investigations into Aboriginal heritage claims, the two are conflated. He argues that the legislation would be most effective if the former definition of tradition were used as a bench mark (Weiner 1999).[7]

The 'inventedness of tradition' has been documented by anthropologists for other societies. Discussing tourism in Melanesia, Tilley (1997) recognises the way the Small Nambas have used the past to bring about a 'symbolic construction of community'. The Small Nambas have ensured their cultural survival, which traditionally depended on exchange of ritual

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Territory. A man called Smith murdered his wife while drunk. All the Aboriginal people agreed that it would be better if he did not go to gaol as he was not morally responsible for his crime by virtue of being drunk while he committed it; he was likely to be killed by sorcery whilst in gaol; and his relations did not want to lose him. Some Aborigines attributed the killing to the fact that the wife had abandoned an elderly husband some years previously in order to elope with Smith, and so it was sorcery from an unknown person which had caused her to die at Smith's hands. Therefore he was not responsible as the sorcery was directing his actions. Although everyone agreed with this explanation initially, after a couple of days the women objected to the implication that women who run away deserve to be killed. One old man told Rose that the story was 'bullshit' as that particular type of sorcery had not been used for decades, but it was a good way of dealing with whites, who will accept the wildest stories of magic and sorcery in Aboriginal culture. Rose asserts that while the sorcery explanation was believed to be probably accurate, it was also a sensitive reading of white attitudes towards Aboriginal culture, and that whites will avoid investigating occurrences where there are Aboriginal explanations involving sorcery or tribal law. The outcome was that Smith was represented as not culpable for the killing, and he was sentenced merely to two years imprisonment (Rose 1992:153-164).

[7] Morton (1998) argues similarly, that Native Title is most readily available to those who have been least affected by the doctrine of *terra nullius*.

items, by incorporating ideas from outside their community, and representing them in new ways to assert cultural distinctiveness but in the situation of demonstrations for tourists. Yup'ik Eskimos have also fostered an invented image of 'arch conservationists', people who traditionally know how to care for the environment, to assert the priority of their culture when in disputes with anti-sealing campaigners (Fienup-Riordan 1990). Similarly, in East Africa the question of what it is to be Maasai is disputed amongst Maasai themselves: the boundaries of Maasai culture are flexed in response to political situations, for example in disputes over access to land (Spear 1993).

These ideas can usefully be applied to the situation at Uluṟu. As Merlan points out, in recent years Aboriginal people have been brought into situations where they have to make their ritual beliefs explicit, in the context of an institutionalisation of their rights. Thus, the alleged 'creation' of stories or sites is really just a result of talking about what was originally reserved, and may simply be a reflection of their perception of black-white politics. At Uluṟu, we can see that the selection of three of the *Tjukurpa* stories is a way to articulate black-white relations. Unused to revealing stories to outsiders, Aṉangu have selected and standardised what can be related, and selected stories at the lowest, safest level to be told to tourists.

Archer writes that Aborigines use an idealised, reconstructed past to legitimate a current struggle (1991). In regard to the anti-climb message, one aspect of the past (from the *Tjukurpa*) has been selected and elaborated to become an encompassing message about what it is to be Aṉangu. It is powerful because it affects every tourist to the area, by focusing on the most popular activity, and forces every tourist to consider Aboriginal issues. The

message can be appreciated on several different levels. It could simply be a plea not to climb, to ensure tourists' safety. However, by revealing that not climbing has stemmed from the *Tjukurpa*, we can see that once again Anangu are underlining their rightful ownership of the land through knowledge of the associated *Tjukurpa* stories.

The *'nganana tatintja wiya'* message is, however, contradictory. In stating 'we don't climb' the message is inaccurate, as in fact some Anangu do climb the Rock, indeed they are obliged to as part of one of their ceremonies. Thus *'nganana'*, is 'we' but not all of us, all of the time. Certain Anangu are the only people who are permitted to climb the rock. This message has been created to provide an identity and assertion of ownership for ALL Anangu, by saying that none of them climb. The fact that some Anangu do climb, and indeed MUST climb on occasions is irrelevant, as the importance of the message is its unified nature. The intention is not to distinguish between different categories of Anangu, but to distinguish Anangu from whites, from tourists, from climbers.[8]

Further, the portrayal of what it is to be Anangu is also to a certain extent debated. Though they assert *'nganana'*, typically Anangu argue about who genuinely is or is not included in *'nganana'*. During my fieldwork, there were several occasions where it was disputed what it was to be Anangu. (In fact, arguments about who was, or was not, Anangu were more prevalent than mentions of the climb). On the first occasion, there was a meeting in the Mutitjulu community where Tjamiwa had offended the community liaison

[8] It is interesting to note that the action of 'climbing' is not simply anyone scrambling up the side of Uluru. Rangers and rescue personnel who ascend Uluru for reasons of maintenance,

officer, Jon Willis, such that Jon had left the room. It was argued by Aṉangu that Tjamiwa should be punished for causing this offence, as Jon was Aṉangu by virtue of his having passed though men's initiation. Even though Jon is a whitefella from Queensland, he was considered a senior Aṉangu man. Thus, being Aṉangu was determined not by birth but by knowledge and initiation. Other arguments were raised when Joanne Willmott came to the community and was voted by Aṉangu to be the chair of the Board of Management, even though she is an Aboriginal woman of mixed descent from Queensland. Members of the Board do not have to be Aṉangu (i.e. Pitjantjatjara/ Yankunytjatjara people), or traditional owners, they simply have to be voted to be representatives of the traditional owners. Some agreed with Joanne Willmott's appointment, others complained bitterly that a non-Aṉangu person was representing them, to the extent that the media was alerted to the debate. This caused division in the Muṯitjulu community, eventuating in a community vote of no confidence in the Board of Management.

Cassidy Uluṟu also discussed who was or was not properly a traditional owner. He and his brother Andrew Uluṟu felt bitterly that there were Aṉangu who had been declared as traditional owners who had no place at Uluṟu. They described them as 'greedy buggers' for asserting that they were traditional owners in order to gain the income from the lease, but really these Aṉangu had no rights or obligations to the land. Andrew and Cassidy also expressed sadness that blackfellas would effectively steal land from other

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cleaning and rescue work are not deemed to be 'climbing' Uluṟu. 'Climbing' is therefore an activity with the specific intentional motivation of pleasure and recreation.

blackfellas, echoing Yami Lester's plaint to me that "This is a bad time for blackfellas. You see blackfella against blackfella. I don't know why."

Other anthropologists have noted the dispute of identity amongst Anangu, and have argued that for many Anangu, *Tjukurpa* is not the main concern in their lives, rather kinship and politics are paramount (Laurent Dousset, pers. comm.). Contesting who is or is not properly Anangu is more pertinent than *Tjukurpa*. This distinction amongst Anangu themselves can be seen in their attitude towards the handful of people still living a hunter-gatherer way of life in the Western Desert - people who though aware of whitefellas, have opted to remain 'undiscovered'. Anangu recognise the footprints of such family members, whom they have not seen for many years, and see fires in the distance, where they do not know who is camping there, so are aware of these recluses. They describe them as ghosts, saying they are 'savages' because they choose to remain in the desert (Laurent Dousset, pers. comm.).

The elaboration of the anti-climb message disguises friction amongst Anangu themselves, by presenting a coherent, undisputed, unified identity of what it is to be Anangu. Stating 'we don't climb' is disingenuous, as certain Anangu are the only ones permitted to climb, and their notion of who is encompassed by 'we' is a matter for dispute. The importance of the anti-climb message is that it communicates to whites a distinctive Anangu identity. As was seen in the Coronation Hill debate, commentators criticised Aborigines for opposing economic development. It could be argued that this was a shrewd political move for Aboriginal people, as by focusing their opposition on mining, they guaranteed the attention of whites, and put forward a world view

that was the antithesis of white ideology. As Maddock pointed out, the battle was between God, Caesar and Mammon (1988). Similarly, by asserting behaviour that is the exact opposite of tourist behaviour at Uluṟu (climbing), Aṉangu ensure that *their* perception of the landscape is attended to.

Tourists

The Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park currently receives 350,000 visitors a year, and Park statistics reveal that 70% of them intend to climb Uluṟu. I surveyed tourists within the Park at the peak time for climbing (July) and found that actually 45% do so[9]. At the base of the climb I conducted interviews and handed out questionnaires to those who had completed the climb.

My surveys revealed that for 93% of visitors, this was their first visit to Uluṟu, and 60% did not intend to revisit in the future. 71% said they did not intend to buy a T-shirt or certificate claiming to have climbed the rock. Concerning the dangers of climbing Uluṟu, 72% claimed to have seen the warning signs at the base of the climb, but my observations of tourist behaviour revealed that most people stream out of coaches, straight up the side of Uluṟu and do not read the signs before they climb. It is common for tourists to read them once they descend, and are waiting in the area for their friends to finish their climb. 63% told me that the signs did not discourage them from climbing Uluṟu; 17% said they did think twice having read the danger

[9]This is the number of people who climb up Uluṟu as far as the start of the chain put there to assist climbers over the steepest part of the climb, or further.

warnings, but still climbed. Many said their tour guides had also warned them about the dangers of climbing Uluṟu.[10]

Most interesting were the results pertaining to knowledge of Aboriginal involvement in the Park. 93% of climbers were aware that Aborigines owned the Park, and 82% supported this. Reasons given for support were that the land was Aboriginal originally, it was fair that they should own the land, and that Aborigines have a spiritual tie with the land. The few who did not support Aboriginal ownership said the land was for everyone. 86% were aware that Aṉangu did not want tourists to climb the rock. It should be remembered that those who were interviewed were people who had just descended from the climb, so 86% performed an activity that they knew their hosts did not wish them to do. When questioned about their rationale for climbing, people had a range of reasons including disregard for Aboriginal wishes because they had witnessed Aboriginal drunkenness or littering, and the abandoned cars at the side of the roads; that they had great respect for Aboriginal culture and so having felt that respect should be permitted to climb; and questioning why Aṉangu do not just close the climb if they feel strongly about tourists not climbing.

Regarding the safety issues of the climb, 45% of tourists said they were compelled to undertake the challenge of the climb and they considered themselves fit enough. Often tourists compared their perceived level of fitness with others' on the climb. Commonly they commented that others were too old, too young, too fat or unfit to climb, whereas they, by contrast, *were* fit enough to complete this demanding feat. Alarmingly, people explained to me

[10]The pertinence of these statistics will be demonstrated in the chapter entitled *Nintiringkupai*.

that they saw the climb as a chance to prove wrong all those who had asserted that they were unfit to climb because they had a heart condition, asthma, or were seriously overweight. One girl climbed as far as she could despite having an asthma attack. She returned to the base to retrieve her inhaler from her friend, and said she only turned back because she tasted blood! She had seen the climb as a way to deny the label 'asthmatic' and many others similarly saw in the climb a chance to refute medical labels.

When asked for any comments they wished to make about the climb or the area generally, the responses were interesting. Tourists said the climb was dangerous and should be closed, that those on the climb were not responsible enough to decide about their own fitness and so the rangers should decide who is or is not fit enough to climb. They complained that the route of the climb was slippery, that the number of people on the climb should be limited, perhaps by issuing permits to climb.

The statements that tourists made about the climb, and their experiences of it are interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, regarding their own experiences, we can see that tourists see in the climb a physical challenge, a must-do activity. They use the climb to assert a physical identity for themselves: fit enough to climb Uluru. This pertains even when climbers are patently unfit for such an activity. Tourists compare their bodies with those of others on the climb: many said "If he/she can do it, then so can I". It seemed that the warnings about the dangers of the climb only added to the enjoyment of successfully completing an activity that is stated to be highly dangerous and should not be undertaken lightly. This can also be seen to explain the comments about the dangers of the climb, and that it should be

closed in future. There was a feeling also of exclusivity: only those who were fit and daring would be able to complete the climb. Once again tourists asserted that others should not climb because they were not fit enough to join this club. Interestingly though, tourists were not prepared to declare their exclusivity by purchasing T-shirts to say that they had climbed Uluṟu, though many of them automatically receive a certificate of climbing from their tour companies. There is something of a festival atmosphere at the base of the climb: those descending are photographed and videoed by relatives and friends at the bottom, and they often complete the last stage of the descent waving, doing victory salutes and yelling. Once at the bottom, well-wishers congratulate them, and the climber checks the time it took him to complete the climb.[11] The Park urges tourists to allow at least two hours to complete the climb, so that climbers will be able to rest frequently. Unfortunately, many see this as 'the target to beat', and use the fact that they completed the climb in less than two hours once again to assert their physical prowess. Having descended, climbers then typically explain just how difficult, windy and slippery the climb was to those who had opted not to attempt it. It all adds up to hero status.[12]

It may be argued that the promotion of the Uluṟu climb is itself an invented tradition: one that has been invented by the tourism industry. Climbing as a tourist activity obviously only commenced when tourism to the rock was practically feasible: during the 1960s. However, mass tourism to the rock really only occurred from the 1970s onwards. The notion that at Uluṟu

[11] It is almost exclusively men who check the time it takes them to complete the climb. The only woman I encountered doing so was a soldier in the Israeli army.
[12]These notions will be examined in further detail in the chapter entitled *Nintiringkupai.*

one climbs the rock as the 'must do' activity, therefore has only been current for the past thirty years. The climb was promoted as the must do activity by the tourism industry: so effectively that tourists explain that climbing is 'traditional' if one visits Uluṟu. They place the activity of climbing into the past, ignoring the fact that whitefellas have only been aware of the existence of Uluṟu for a little over a century. The 'invention' of 'traditional' activities by the tourism industry is not exclusive to Uluṟu. The majority of tourist destinations are promoted in terms of only a few of their attributes, to the neglect of other opportunities in the locale.

On the issue of Aboriginal culture, the revelation that 86% of climbers know that Aṉangu do not approve of what they have just done is interesting, especially if it is remembered that 82% of climbers support Aboriginal ownership of the Park. It can be seen that through the anti-climb message, Aṉangu have forced 86% of climbers to consider how they feel about Aboriginal culture. Many climbers confided that they did feel guilty about climbing, and that they would never climb again out of respect for Aboriginal sensibilities; but they said that climbing was something they had to do, that the trip would not be complete without attempting the climb. For these people the European ideology of conquering mountains supersedes the Aboriginal *Tjukurpa*. This holds also for the many Japanese tourists, many of whom have also climbed Fujiyama. Many tourists, both climbers and non-climbers, asked me why Aṉangu do not simply close the climb if they feel strongly that people should not climb Uluṟu.

If Aṉangu were simply to close the climb, there would be extreme hostility from the tourism industry, the Northern Territory government, and

the media, creating a political backlash against land rights and Aboriginal people generally which would not advance the Aboriginal cause. By saying they do not want people to climb, but making the decision to climb or not up to the individual, Anangu ensure that the vast majority of visitors to the National Park are confronted by Anangu culture. Firstly, tourists are made fully aware of the fact that they are on Aboriginal owned land. Then they are asked not to do the very activity they have come to the area to perform, out of respect for their hosts. The tourist is faced with a dilemma: to climb and cause offence, or lose the once in a lifetime opportunity to prove their adventurous nature and personal fitness. The point is not whether or not people actually climb, but that they are forced into a consideration of Aboriginal culture, coerced into accepting that there is a different way of appreciating the landscape that may be the antithesis of the tourist apprehension. Promoting the message of not climbing, but leaving the climb open is thus the most effective way to assert Aboriginal ideology and connections to the land.

Many tourists, however, decide not to climb the rock, either out of respect for Anangu or discouraged by the dangers of climbing. Those who do not climb are often taken on base tours of the rock, where they are introduced to the three *Tjukurpa* stories associated with Uluru, with the concomitant messages concerning Anangu's perceived role in black-white relations. Other tourists may visit the Cultural Centre, where not only are they again brought into contact with the *Tjukurpa* stories, but the anti-climb message is passionately inscribed on huge displays.

However, it is common for tour operators to make a visit to the Cultural Centre the last activity of the morning before returning to the resort at

Yulara, and so both climbers and non-climbers visit the Cultural Centre together. There they are categorically informed about how Anangu feel about their recent activities on the climb, and many tourists who had previously felt proud that they had achieved the climb then feel guilty for doing so. A bifurcation takes place, where those who have climbed defend their right to do so ("They could close it if they wanted to") and those who opted not to climb grow sanctimonious. This battle is played out in the Cultural Centre's visitors' book. There used to be a book at the top of the climb, for people to sign to prove they had climbed. However, the book was stolen repeatedly, and with the vast numbers of people ascending the rock, it meant that a ranger had to climb every day simply to replace the visitors' book. The Cultural Centre book has taken its place, and is signed by those who wish to record that they accomplished the climb, and those who want to assert that they respected the wishes of Anangu.

The climb becomes the site of an identity contest amongst tourists themselves. Those who climb assert a physical identity of bravery and fitness; those who choose not to climb declare themselves in tune with Aboriginal sensibilities. By respecting Anangu beliefs and not climbing, they claim an identity for themselves as 'politically correct'. The overwhelming message in the Cultural Centre that Anangu are offended by climbers causes these identities to become entrenched. Many tourists claim they feel a spiritual affinity with Anangu, and say they decided to visit Uluru as part of a spiritual journey. Anangu actually resent this attitude (they are more vocal against this appropriation of their spirituality than they are against the climb!), as they say they are the only ones who have the *Tjukurpa*, that the land is theirs, and

whitefellas claiming a spiritual link with the land are once again trying to dispossess them of what is rightfully theirs.[13]

Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park

For the National Park, there are three stated concerns: *Tjukurpa*, tourism and ecology. It is my contention that the only area in the National Park where these three concerns intersect and are successfully accommodated is at the Uluṟu climb.

As has been discussed previously, the National Park is run according to traditional Aboriginal land management practices. The guiding principle of the Park is *Tjukurpa*. All of the white rangers and Park staff take the protection of *Tjukurpa* very seriously: it is common to undertake a ranger-led walk in the Park and hear no mention of any other explanations for the landscape and its uses, apart from those pertaining to *Tjukurpa*.[14] However, when I asked ranger staff if they themselves actually believed in *Tjukurpa*, they denied it vehemently, saying "It's not my culture, of course I don't believe it". Potentially, the whole ethos of *Tjukurpa* could be undermined here. If a ranger leads a guided walk for tourists, attributing all explanations to *Tjukurpa*, then is asked at the end of the walk by a tourist if s/he personally believes in *Tjukurpa*, the ranger will deny it. So the rangers are promoting a world view which they themselves do not subscribe to, but presenting it as if it were their own. It is exacerbated by the fact that they do not distance

[13] Whitefella attribution of spirituality to Uluṟu will be discussed in chapter seven: *nintiringkupai*, in regard to the 'returned rocks' phenomenon.

[14]The reasons for this will be discussed fully in the chapter entitled *Piṟanpa*, but basically the white ranger staff can be identified as marginal people who do not fit easily into mainstream

themselves from *Tjukurpa* by saying, "This is what Anangu believe" but say instead "We burn the country because that's what the *Tjukurpa* says we must do."

When I arrived in the area, I was struck not only by how the ranger staff had wholeheartedly taken on the prescriptions of *Tjukurpa*, but also by how vociferous they were about tourists climbing the rock. Many were militant in their belief that the climb should be closed, not for safety reasons, but for the religious reason that it is a sacred pathway to Anangu. It was striking that Anangu never mentioned the climb, but every conversation with ranger staff included mention of the climb, and expressions of contempt for those who climbed. Many rangers used the sunrise viewing area, where hundreds of tourists congregate each morning to photograph the changing colours of Uluru, as a chance to talk to tourists and dissuade them from climbing. On the free ranger-led Mala walk, rangers seemed almost be pleading with tourists not to climb Uluru.

It is my contention that the anti-climb message was held much more passionately by white Park staff than by Anangu themselves, but that Anangu recognised the potential of the message as a political statement about their place in the world, in order to force a consideration of their lives by all the tourists who visit the area. In this respect, the anti-climb message is an invented tradition, but invented by whites as an elaboration of an Anangu expression of disapproval, then manipulated and strengthened to become an all encompassing political message and statement of identity for blackfellas in the

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Western society and so claim a niche and identity for themselves by appropriating certain aspects of Aboriginal culture, and declaring themselves the guardians of *Tjukurpa*.

realm of interactions with whites. As Weiner (1997) has written, any site can become the focus for a contest in which the real stakes are identity, responsibility and authority.

It can be seen that the anti-climb message as promoted by white ranger staff dates back at least to 1991, when the Park requested tour companies to offer an alternative to the Uluṟu Climb. This indicates that by 1991, Park staff were considerably concerned by the climb. The environmentalist Allan Fox devised the Uluṟu Walk as an alternative to the climb: a 9.5 km interpretative walk around the base of Uluṟu. This walk was marketed by the tour company Uluru Experience, which even today remains as the only non-Aboriginal owned tour company not to promote the climb.

Only one member of the Park staff admitted that Aṉangu did not really care whether tourists climbed or not, and that was the Park Manager, Julian Barry, who had lived and worked with Aṉangu for several years. When I arrived in the field, there was a peculiar situation of Aṉangu seemingly neutral about the climb, but ranger staff who were passionately anti-climb. It was expressed by one of the Visitor Management Consultants, as "Tourists come here and are told they can climb if they want to, but then they are vilified if they do so."

The climb was a problem for the VMS consultants, and for Park management generally, as the climb is a major visitor management tool, and it assists the Park's other concern, that of ecology. No alternative to the climb could be found that was so beneficial to the Park's fragile ecology. Julian Barry told me that he considered the climb a good activity, as the tourists came into the Park, climbed Uluṟu, then they were tired so returned to the resort for

a swim, drink and a rest, and so did not have the energy or inclination to explore other parts of the Park, potentially causing degradation to fragile ecosystems. Julian expressed it as "All these whitefellas trying to be PC are eroding the country". He told me that if increasing numbers of tourists eschewed the climb, it would not only cause even worse overcrowding at art sites and waterholes, but would also result in degradation to revegetation areas. Potentially there were dangers of erosion and graffiti at the art sites, littering along the paths around the rock, widening of paths into revegetation areas as tourists wandered around Uluṟu and left the path to take photographs or avoid muddy patches, and tourists venturing off the paths for toileting, as the only toilet facilities were located at the base of the climb.

The decline in the numbers of climbers also resulted in costly rescues at Kata Tjuṯa, as tourists who opted not to climb decided instead to undertake the strenuous Valley of the Winds Walk. This 7.5 km walk is not only arduous, but the path is uneven, resulting in numerous accidents through twisted ankles and broken legs. The temperature in the valleys between the rock domes can rise above 50 degrees Celsius, and heat stress is a very real, life threatening danger at Kata Tjuṯa. As Kata Tjuṯa is 50 kms away from Yulara, and the Valley of the Winds walking track is difficult and uneven, it typically takes two hours for rescue personnel to reach a victim. Rescues at Kata Tjuṯa therefore are particularly unpleasant and costly. Increasing numbers of accidents, and particularly heat stress incidents at Kata Tjuṯa resulted in the Park deciding to close the Valley of the Winds walking track on those days when the temperature was expected to exceed 36 degrees Celsius.

The climb was the only place in the Park where the three concerns of ecology, tourism and *Tjukurpa* met, and could be accommodated. 70% of tourists intended to climb Uluṟu, and climbing was seen for many years as the sole activity in the area, promoted by the tourism industry. Tourists do not erode the surface of the rock: they climb on a small area of the rock, on a defined pathway, and the hard sandstone means that very little damage is caused to the rock itself. Climbing helps to preserve and protect more fragile areas of the Park. Tourists who climb are not touching delicate rock art, wandering away from the paths and degrading revegetation areas, or causing overcrowding at other areas. It could be argued that the route of the climb is effectively written off as a visitor management tool, in order to preserve the integrity of the rest of the Park. Tourists leave the climb exhausted, and so are unlikely then to proceed to the Valley of the Winds walk where they face real danger of having an accident and needing a costly rescue.

Tjukurpa is accommodated by *forcing* tourists into a consideration of Aboriginal beliefs, and why Aṉangu themselves do not climb Uluṟu: it is decreed in the *Tjukurpa* that they should not do so. The climb is the one concerted focus for visitors to the Park, and so by considering whether or not to climb Uluṟu, tourists are inveigled into a consideration of Aboriginal culture and sensitivities. It has been demonstrated that 86% of tourists completing the climb are aware that Aṉangu do not wish them to climb, therefore it can be argued that 86% of tourists on the climb have been forced into a consideration of *Tjukurpa*. For the three concerns of the National Park to be satisfactorily accommodated relies on maintaining a tension between them: the climb message cannot be too effective or ecology will be sacrificed.

As was pointed out earlier in this chapter, Anangu do not suffer a political backlash by closing the climb, but they ensure that their interests are promoted by the simple (but astute!) act of keeping the climb open. Therefore, the climb is the only area in the National Park where all three stated concerns of the Park, ecology, tourism and *Tjukurpa,* are met satisfactorily.

Yulara Resort

Reactions to the Uluru climb have been mixed from the tourism industry. For many years the climb was marketed as the sole activity in the area. Until recently, the tourism industry has continued to promote the Uluru climb and neglected to mention Anangu wishes, causing dissatisfaction amongst tourists who booked holidays expecting to climb, then arrived and found messages imploring them to reconsider. Ray Brittingham from VIP Travel Australia insists that climbing was not offensive to Anangu prior to handback, and asserts that Anangu used to enjoy watching people climb. For this reason, he persists in marketing the climb, and distributing free certificates to all of his clients who climb the rock. He insists that the majority of foreign visitors to the area simply want to climb the rock, and he intends to facilitate this.

Other operators have decided to promote the anti-climb message and offer alternatives to climbing such as walking round the base of Uluru or visiting Kata Tjuta. Some have found the balance between respect for Aboriginal culture and the demands of tourism difficult, and have tried to serve both. A good example of this is AAT Kings, a huge tour company running coach tours in many parts of Australia, but which finds the majority of its income from tours to and from Uluru. In its 1997/98 brochure, AAT Kings

advertises tours with guides who are knowledgeable about Aboriginal culture, and who will advise tourists about the correct behaviour at the rock so that they will not cause offence to their Aboriginal hosts, e.g. by photographing sacred sites. AAT Kings is also the tour company which provides transport for Anangu Tours, and they promote Anangu Tours products in their brochure. The brochure informs tourists that climbing Uluru is dangerous and offensive to Anangu, then offers a free climber's certificate to all whose who climb Uluru!

The Resort itself has an ambiguous relationship with the Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park. For many years the Park and Resort were in an antagonistic relationship, each side refusing to see that its livelihood was dependent on the other. That relationship has improved in the last few years, and while now not openly hostile is still characterised by mutual distrust. David White, the resort's operations manager, told me that the resort would like to promote the area as 'Uluru' rather than 'Ayers Rock', but he explained that the overseas market takes upwards of three years to register such changes, and that the name cannot be changed until the market is ready. He pointed out that foreign tourists were familiar with the term 'Ayers Rock' but very few of them knew the term 'Uluru', so like it or not, the Resort is compelled to maintain the familiar term.

An interesting development occurred during my fieldwork. For many years, the climb has been promoted as the must do activity in the area, to the extent that tourists are surprised that there are so many other activities within the area. Towards the end of 1996 the Ayers Rock Resort Company commenced an advertising campaign which listed ten activities in the area

other than climbing Uluru. It may be argued that the Resort was at last promoting Anangu sensitivities, until it is pointed out that the advertisements were saying that there was so much to do in the area, people should stay longer than the typical 1.6 nights, thereby spending more money in the resort on hotel rooms, meals and gifts. The anti-climb message was taken up by the resort, not out of deference to the Aboriginal owners of the rock from which the resort came to be built, but because through promoting the anti-climb message, the resort saw a way to make more money through longer tourist visits to the area.[15]

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that the 'we don't climb' message, while always being a tenet of Anangu beliefs, has undergone a progression and development into a unified political statement of identity. Prior to handback of the land to the traditional owners, Anangu used tourist activity on the climb as a means to supplement their income through the sale of drinks and artefacts. At handback it was acknowledged that climbing had long been the major activity in the area, and that whereas Anangu did not condone the practice, they were not prepared to close the climb. As Anangu security deepened through joint management of the National Park, and the violent opposition to Aboriginal land rights subsided, it became possible to use the anti-climb message as a statement of Anangu identity without fear of political reprisals. The Park has come under intense media scrutiny as a World Heritage area and as a model for joint management, creating a vehicle to promote the anti-climb message.

[15] The point should be reinforced that Anangu receive no income from the Yulara resort.

The white rangers initially held the anti-climb message more dearly than Anangu themselves, using it to assert that they were sensitive to Aboriginal beliefs. Expressions of disgust for tourists who chose to climb were a common feature of conversations with white Park staff, whereas the climb was rarely mentioned in private discussions with Anangu. Indeed, those who had lived and worked with Anangu for long periods asserted that Anangu really did not care whether tourists climbed the rock or not. However, progressively the anti-climb message became a feature of all public interactions with whites such as media interviews, ranger walks or tours. Being the antithesis of white perceptions of the area, it ensures white consideration of Anangu culture and relationship with the land. It was also a political message, concealing the contradictions that certain Anangu *do* climb the rock, and also that the notion of 'being Anangu' is a matter for dispute in the private realm.

The climb is problematic for the National Park management, as it is a valuable visitor management tool, assisting in the protection of the fragile ecology of the area, and reducing litter, erosion and rescues. The climb has been cited as the perfect way to dispose of 200,000 visitors a year, in a concentrated area, yet causing minimal damage. However, its dedication to the promotion and protection of *Tjukurpa* means that the Park cannot voice publicly the usefulness of the climb in visitor management.

It is my contention that the climb enables the protection of all three of the National Park's concerns: ecology, tourism and *Tjukurpa*. It has been shown that 86% of climbers are aware that Anangu disapprove of climbing, and in being brought into consideration of the wishes of their hosts they have

been forced to reflect on Aboriginal culture and the ways in which Aboriginal people apprehend the landscape. Whether tourists then decide to climb the rock is immaterial, as the latent purpose of the message is not to prevent climbing but to promote Anangu identity. In this respect it is sublime.

Chapter Five: *minga*

"I am sorry to report that we were deeply disappointed in the conditions surrounding Australia's aborigines. Inside Kata Tjuta National Park's 'Cultural Centre', only one or two people were on duty selling souvenirs. In the courtyard, three aborigines dressed in Western clothes were sitting near a wood fire painting objects with paint and a brush obviously purchased in a hardware store. (So much for authenticity!)...Someone installed two traffic signs at the base of the rock. Tourists trying to capture the changing light at sunset cannot possibly avoid this disturbing anachronism." Letter to Park Manager from an American tourist (emphasis in the original).

Minga is the Anangu term for tourists. It translates as 'small black ant', and is used as tourists streaming up the side of Uluru on the climb, in silhouette, look exactly like tiny ants, dwarfed by the enormous hulking shape of Uluru. Used by Anangu, the term is entirely descriptive; but when used by rangers and National Park staff, the term becomes derogatory.[1]

In this chapter, I will examine the issues of tourism at Uluru. Commencing with a brief review of the literature on the anthropology of tourism, I will then discuss in detail the issues surrounding Aboriginal involvement in tourism, and the political, economic and historical causes of their changing involvement. The final section will examine tourism at Uluru, and present attitudes from both tourists and Anangu.

[1]See chapter six: *piranpa* for a detailed analysis of this.

The Anthropology of Tourism

The anthropology of tourism has a relatively brief history. Apart from Nunez's 1963 article on tourism in Mexico, there were few studies before the late 1970s (Crick 1989). The discipline was slow to gain momentum, but since the late 1980s there has been an outpouring of articles and books on the subject. The literature encompasses a number of concerns: cultural authenticity; the semiotics of tourism; marketing; positive or negative effects of tourism; and presentation of the 'voices' of both tourists and indigenous people.

Many studies foundered over the problem of how to define tourism. In *Hosts and Guests*, Smith defines a tourist as 'a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change' (1989: 1). However, this definition is problematic, as it is too wide to be useful. For example, is a businessman away on foreign travel a 'tourist' if he uses some of his time to explore the local area? Similarly, is a person who visits another town for recreational shopping a 'tourist'? Smith identifies several categories of tourism: ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental and recreational (1989: 4). These can be seen to overlap, and so are minimally useful: perhaps more useful would be to ask tourists how they would define themselves. Graburn (1983; 1989) describes tourism as a pilgrimage, drawing on Leach's analysis of sacred time and rites of passage to conclude that tourism is a leisure 'ritual', outside ordinary time and involving travel; therefore it is similar to pilgrimage. Boorstin and Barthes, however, see tourism as frivolous, and Cohen disagrees that it is similar to pilgrimage (Graburn 1983). Although some tourists do describe themselves as seeking a religious or metaphysical experience whilst travelling, I contend that this is

certainly not the case for all instances of tourism, and so this definition must be used with circumspection.

Many writers have discussed whether tourism and anthropology are different manifestations of the same practice. Crick (1985) argues that reflexivity in anthropological writing laid bare how ethnographic texts are created, and in doing so, has shown that anthropology and tourism are in practice not dissimilar. Fieldworkers, like tourists, experience language difficulties; they may have to pay for their experiences; they question whether they ever truly experience what MacCannell (1976) terms the 'back spaces' indicative of authenticity; and they may rely heavily on cultural brokers such as guides and interpreters, with the concomitant insecurity of valid translation. Bruner (1989) agrees, stating that 'tourism, like ethnography, is not equipped to handle the first rigors of contact, but does best after other agents of European civilisation have pacified the indigenous peoples', and 'what we label as colonialism, ethnography, and tourism are experienced in a comparable manner. The colonialist, the ethnographer, and the tourist are similarly foreigners with great wealth and power... each with their own particular demands and idiosyncratic requirements. To the native peoples, we are the Other'. Harkin (1995) states that anthropology, similarly to tourism, is an appropriation of otherness. At the start of fieldwork, an anthropologist may travel in the same way as tourists, and commence fieldwork by staying in a luxury hotel, may even take some tours in order to become acquainted with the local area. Also, tourists may wear safari suits and pith helmets in imitation of their notions of colonial anthropology, and ethnic tourism (searching for 'quaint customs') (Smith 1989:4) is a parody of fieldwork.

In my opinion, these alleged similarities are purely surface similarities, and one must look at the motivations behind fieldwork and tourism to discover whether truly anthropology and tourism are variants of the same activity. I contend that fieldwork, with its emphasis on long term residence, writing, searching for native meaning in order to make it comprehensible to others, and enquiry posited on a rigorous theoretical background makes ethnography very different from the tourist enterprise, which is predominantly concerned with leisure and enjoyment, even if it is educational. Also, anthropologists have a responsibility towards both the people they represent, and the academy they report to and which funds their work. Errington and Gewertz (1989) point out the dilemma of claiming that anthropology is the same as tourism by saying there is little justification for anthropology if this is true. They say tourists, whatever their motivations and appreciation of the local culture, 'have little impetus or competence to go beyond self-reference: the significance of the other is largely in what it does for oneself', and 'however ultimately incomplete the understanding anthropologists have of the other, we are... incomparably better informed'. They go on to say,

> We use our superior understanding (and we really must emphasise that no tourist seriously attempts to understand a Papua New Guinea kinship, exchange or cosmological system) to convey what the world looks like to the natives and how our world affects theirs. We can document and explicate moments of resistance, capitulation, confusion and indifference. We can place their lives and ours in socio-historical, cultural and systemic context. Thus, if

> we cannot easily differentiate our personal motivation from that of tourists, we can differentiate our politics from theirs.
> (Errington and Gewertz 1989).

Despite the initial reluctance for anthropological engagement with tourism, several writers have discussed why tourism is worthy of anthropological attention. Crick (1985) states that tourists are often encountered during fieldwork, but were rarely mentioned in anthropological writing until the 1980s. He accounts for this omission by arguing that anthropologists find tourists repugnant as they remind anthropologists of the flawed, confusing and partial way in which fieldwork is carried out. He says that studies of tourism and reflexive ethnography may be useful ways to explore the ludic. However, he does acknowledge that the ludic may not be a concept recognisable to other cultures. Nash (1981) argues that tourism is contact between cultures, and so is a prime subject for anthropological analysis. Some writers see tourism as a way to understand our own society: Urry (1988) and Boniface and Fowler (1993) claim that travel is the defining characteristic of modernity; Thurot and Thurot argue that studying tourism is more to look at our society than at others' (1983). Other writers see tourism as a universal phenomenon: Nash, while admitting the difficulty of a cross-cultural definition of 'leisure', nevertheless argues that tourism is prevalent in hunter-gatherer societies, as such people would be used to travelling and visiting (1981). Similarly, Boniface and Fowler (1993) argue that Aboriginal walkabout is also a form of tourism. In response to Nash, Akeroyd dismisses the parallels between tourism, and visiting kin or sacred sites. In such cases,

there is an element of reciprocity or duty, compared with the voluntary, non-reciprocal and temporary nature of tourism.

Many writers have argued for the necessity of exploring the motivations of tourists: much of anthropological writing concentrates on the opinions of the 'host' culture. Crick (1991) gives one tourist motivation as seeking cultural understanding of the other, but he argues that few tourists want extended contact with the other, and that anyway, the necessity of employing a cultural broker, guide or translator means that few tourists truly encounter the other, only a person who is intermediary between the two cultures. Similarly, MacCannell argues that tourism occupies the middle ground between primitive and modern, as the two are regularly placed into direct, face-to-face contact (1992: 17). Therefore, he argues, the distinction between primitive and modern is now no longer appropriate.

Tourism was cited in the 1960s as a positive means for economic development, particularly in Third World countries (Crick 1989). However, since then, it has been shown that tourism is not the panacea it was hoped to be, and many early anthropological studies concentrated on the negative effects of tourism, particularly seeing tourism as an agent for change (Nash 1989, V.L. Smith 1989, Boniface and Fowler 1993). Hitchcock *et al* question this dichotomy between good and bad tourism, arguing that such studies represent cultures as bounded and homogeneous, instead of a changing set of symbols and meanings (1993). *Hosts and Guests* is criticised by Wood (1993) for assuming that tourism is likely to have a negative impact without clearly elaborating on those impacts. He argues that since Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition*, the entire notion of tradition has been called into

question, and the fluidity and creativity of all societies has been recognised. That indigenous people are seen by tourism studies to be somehow 'past' and traditional, unchanging, can be seen by the fact that the Fifth Festival of Pacific Arts was entitled 'The Past in the Present' (Zeppel 1992).

In his 1991 article, Crick acknowledges that tourism may bring problems: local people lose their jobs or are employed in menial, poorly paid work, and tourist enclaves may be established from which locals are excluded, but he argues that one must be careful not to blame tourism for all changes in a society. In Third World settings there may be many other factors influencing change, such as urbanisation, historical processes, population growth and the mass media (Crick 1989). V.L. Smith herself acknowledges claims that television may be more influential than tourism in causing cultural change (1989: 9). Nash (1981) and McKean (1989) recognise that host cultures may resist change, or be more proactive in determining the kind of tourism they wish to encourage. Deitch (1989) discusses the way that tourism provoked a revival of interest in Amerindian weaving and pottery designs amongst locals which resulted in an elaboration of their mythology, a revival of traditional skills, and a useful income.

Host cultures have their own views of tourists, though it is important to remember that there are likely to be many local responses to tourism. The only really satisfactory recognition of this was produced by Crick, in *Resplendent Sites, Discordant Voices* (1994) where he offers an analysis of the many local responses to tourism in Sri Lanka, though Waldren's analysis of the changes tourism has brought to different generations of people living in the village of Deia on Mallorca is also an attempt to tease out different responses to tourism

(1996). Bruner discusses New Guinean puzzlement as to why tourists take so many photographs, and their belief that tourists come to see them to find out whether or not New Guineans are civilised. The New Guineans also point out the wealth differential between them and the tourists, and are offended that, despite this, tourists insist on bartering (1989).

Regarding tourists, their motivations and opinions have been largely under-represented in the anthropological literature, though tourists' search for authenticity is often cited as a motivation for travel (Bruner 1989; Crick 1985; 1989; Culler 1981; Daniel 1996; Douglas 1996; Errington and Gewertz 1989; Harkin 1995; MacCannell 1976; Silver 1993; S.Smith 1989). One exception to this is Moeran's analysis of Japanese tourism, where he examines tourist brochures to determine the motivations for travel (1983). These emerge as experiencing nature (for those who live in cities); comparing foreign cultures with that of Japan; shopping for brand labels; and the perceived high culture of Europe. The predominant motivation of experiencing an authentic other has led to some interesting analyses and paradoxes. Crick argues that places are marketed and created such that tourists do not experience anywhere 'real' (Crick 1991). Similarly, Boorstin claims that tourism prevents real encounters with others (Crick 1989). Bruner (1989) states that tourism is more about how we imagine people to be, rather than how they truly are and MacCannell argues that tourists' search for the authentic leads to an artificial preservation of the non-modern in the modern (1976: 8), and this can result in what he terms 'the performative primitive' (1992: 26). This performative primitive results in Melanesian locals being encouraged to behave as 'travesties of themselves' even though by simply being themselves they would be

interesting to tourists (Douglas 1996: 194). Silver (1993) says that in tourism marketing, indigenous people are portrayed how we imagine them to be authentic: with static traditions.[2] However, he remarks that prior to colonialism, indigenous people had a multifaceted culture, and this portrayal of indigenous cultures as single and static dates back to colonial encounters rather than to tourism marketing. The tourists' search for the authentic may result in ambiguity: Errington and Gewertz write that tourists to Papua New Guinea were disappointed when locals appeared to have been affected by contact with modern cultures, while yet realising that they themselves may be the agents for change. Tourists were disconcerted when performances openly acknowledged the presence of tourists: at the end of a Chambri initiation tourists were encouraged to applaud and take photographs, and they were noticeably discomfited by this (Errington and Gewertz 1989). This would seem to undermine Urry's (1988) assertion that the 'post' tourist is aware of, and expecting, inauthenticity.

Daniel writes that although dance performances for tourists may change in context and length, nevertheless they remain authentic. Other art forms are perceived by tourists as authentic if they are replicas of functional objects, but this does not allow for innovation. By contrast, dance performances often have sections that are supposed to be filled by solo improvisations, and this changes the dance. However, the energy expended in the dance is experienced by both dancers and audience, and the very portrayal of authentic experience by performers can transform it from the mundane to an

[2] In the 1998 Huxley lecture, Sahlins expresses similar dissatisfaction with contemporary anthropology which grieves for the loss of the pristine native, who is mistakenly believed to be the staple of anthropological enquiry (forthcoming).

actual authentic experience (1996). She writes 'the experience of performing, especially the experience of dancing, is ultimately a route towards genuineness: that space and time where the energy within a dance performance deepens from a routine presentation to a more intense and intensely experienced performance by both the performer and the viewer' and '[b]oth the audience and performers can identify performances that are more genuine, or profoundly experienced, than routine re-enactments of dance traditions'.

The examination of the quest for authenticity has led to discussions of the semiotics of tourism. MacCannell's 1976 work *The Tourist* was seminal in this. He argues that tourism is an attempt to recreate what has been lost in modern society, and only exists in the past: thus the re-creation of the non-modern in the modern (p.8). Tourist attractions are signs: the first contact a tourist has with an attraction is with its representation (p.109). Further, a tourist does not see the whole of a place, but a series of carefully selected elements, which MacCannell terms 'symbolic markers' (p.111 ff.). These elements are experienced as a series of stages, taking the tourist progressively into the 'back regions' of the society, which are perceived of as more 'real' or authentic. Thus tours of Paris often include visits to the sewers and the morgue, the back regions, so tourists feel they have experienced the real Paris (p.106). Culler (1981) analyses the search for the authentic by arguing that the proliferation of tourist reproductions function to mark something as original or authentic. Tourists are interested in something as a sign of itself, or as an instance of cultural practice. Harkin takes up this argument, and agrees that what marks something as authentic is the distinction between it and the

ubiquitous reproductions. The original becomes 'sacralised' (1995). The process of sacralisation transforms a particular natural or cultural object as part of a tourist ritual. However, there must be features of the object which mark it as apart from the ordinary. Urry argues that often the site is extraordinary, in a remarkable physical location, and able to offer experiences that are out of the ordinary (1988).

In summary, the anthropology of tourism has moved away from accusations of neo-colonialism and enforced, negative social change, to see tourism as a system of signs, and a useful model through which to apprehend the way we understand our own society, and notions of cultural tradition, authenticity and the ludic. Tourist destinations are to a certain extent created, but they must have extraordinary physical attributes for the site to be a successful tourist experience. Tourists are seen as seeking the authentic in non-modern societies, to compensate for the lack of authenticity perceived in modern society. In this respect, tourism is essentially about comparison and difference. These arguments will be seen to be especially pertinent in the following analysis of Aboriginal participation in tourism.

It is my contention that previous analyses of tourism have failed to underline the crucial differences between tourism, as essentially a Western capitalist endeavour, and the ideologies of indigenous people which may focus on kinship, reciprocity or spirituality, for example. Therefore, tourism and indigenous cultures are ideologically incompatible. Their incompatibility will be explored and elaborated in regard to Aboriginal engagement with tourism.

Aboriginal Tourism in Australia

In this section, I will outline the historical development of Aboriginal tourism, and why Aboriginal involvement in tourism became much more prevalent. Unfortunately, such ventures were predominantly unsuccessful, and I will discuss the reasons for this. I will then go on to explore one area of Aboriginal tourism business that is successful, and is likely to remain so.

Development of Aboriginal Involvement in Tourism

Although it is often assumed that Aboriginal involvement in tourism is a recent occurrence, in 1965, the Harris, Kerr and Forster Report identified an important role for Aborigines in tourism. They saw participation in tourism as a way to preserve traditional tribal life and customs: through the institution of museums; demonstrations of traditional tools and bush tucker; dance displays; and the manufacture of art and artefacts as an adjunct to the visitor experience at scenic attractions (Altman 1988: 32). The Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs, known simply as the Miller Report, announced in 1985 that there was little research into the impact of tourism on Aboriginal people (Altman 1988: 64), and in 1987, the Blanchard Homelands Report emphasised the importance of Aboriginal arts and crafts rather than participation in other tourism businesses (Finlayson 1991).

These recommendations apart, Aboriginal participation in tourism was given a decided boost with the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991. The Commission was charged with investigating the high numbers of Aboriginal suicides in prison, and the

disproportionate number of Aborigines who were incarcerated.[3] The Commission highlighted the poor living standards suffered by Aborigines, and their financial dependency on welfare payments. Tourism, alongside arts and crafts and pastoralism, was seen as a way to achieve economic independence, and thereby improved esteem in the eyes of the wider Australian public (Jacobs and Gale 1994: 4 f.; Roach and Probst 1993: xiii). It was recommended that Aborigines be given assistance to develop community businesses, and tourism was advocated as suitable for even very remote Aboriginal communities (ATSIC *et al* 1993). It was also held that Aboriginal involvement in tourism would be an effective means of communication between indigenous people and the wider Australian public, and so may help in curbing racism by educating people about Aboriginal culture and history (Jacobs and Gale 1994: 5).

There were several reasons to suppose that tourism would be economically beneficial to Aboriginal communities. Firstly, the Australia Council conducted a survey in 1990 which found that 70% of international visitors were interested in seeing or learning about Aboriginal culture, and 30% bought Aboriginal art or artefacts. 20% went to museums or galleries specifically to see Aboriginal art (Finlayson 1991). However, a conference held in 1993 suggested that of the 70% of international visitors who wanted to experience Aboriginal culture, only 7% achieved this (ATSIC *et al* 1993). At

[3] There is some dispute over the causes of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Aborigines themselves maintain that incarceration is such a terrible experience that suicide is a likely response. However, Tim Rowse argues that the high number of Aboriginal deaths in custody occur because Aborigines are twenty-seven times more likely than a non-Aboriginal person to be in custody, based on a survey in August 1988. A follow-up survey in June 1989 showed they were fifteen times more likely to be in custody. Rowse argues that these figures can be explained partially by reference to high fine-default due to poverty (Rowse 1993: 48).

this time there was an increase in cultural tourism generally. The World Tourism Organisation announced in 1985 that 'both culture and tourism have become democratised and are no longer confined to elites' (Zeppel and Hall 1992). It could also be argued that since the 1976 *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act*, and the subsequent handback of Kakadu and Uluru National Parks, it was recognised that Aboriginal people potentially could control access to huge tracts of the Northern Territory, so encouraging them to allow access through tourism was beneficial to the tourism industry as a whole. Also, Aboriginal involvement in these National Parks was seen to add to the visitors' experience: tourists held notions of Aboriginal people as 'arch conservationists', and this idea was ratified by seeing Aborigines working as Park rangers (Cordell 1993a; Finlayson 1991).[4] Jacobs and Gale also record that visitors to National Parks are disappointed if Aboriginal involvement in the Park is perceived to be low. Tourists often expect to see or meet Aboriginal people (1994: 58). There is also a more insidious reason for advocating Aboriginal participation in tourism: in order to appropriate a long history for a relatively recent nation. This was stated explicitly in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism industry Strategy:

> The new millennium presents a wonderful opportunity to showcase Australia's indigenous heritage and cultures. Events such as the

[4]Hermes (1992) has written that there is a progression in the way that Aboriginal people are evaluated by whites. Initial contact with indigenous people saw them as noble savages, then as a dying race. In Australia, from the 1920s onwards, it was attempted to assimilate Aborigines into white society, until in the past twenty years they have been valued increasingly as arch conservationists, in tune with the land, and possessing superior knowledge for its preservation. See also Sackett (1991) on depictions of Aborigines as conservationists. He

> Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and the Centenary of Federation present exciting opportunities to promote to the world an image of contemporary Australia as a culturally rich and diverse nation. The Strategy will play an important role in ensuring that our indigenous cultures are seen as a distinctive, *and yet integral*, part of the Australia identity (ATSIC and The Office of National Tourism 1997. My emphasis).

It can be seen that Aboriginal music and images of Aborigines are used routinely in advertising for holidays in Australia, whether there is an Aboriginal content to the tour or not. Tourist marketing often portrays Aboriginal people as timeless and possessing an ancient culture, with no reference to contemporary conditions. An advertisement for the Northern Territory announces 'experience what life was like in Australia 60,000 years ago', and offers traditional hunter-gatherer tools and weapons, Dreamtime stories and painting (Maiden 1994). A brochure produced by the Northern Territory Tourism Commission is titled 'People of Two Times'; however, it does go on to explain that Aboriginal culture is dynamic and incorporates elements of Western technology. The NTTC is keen to appropriate Aboriginality as a feature of life in the Territory: the same brochure states explicitly that '"Aboriginality" has emerged as a vital element in the identity of Australia's Northern Territory', and a brochure specifically for Aboriginal tourism products is entitled 'Come Share Our Culture'. The images in the

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discusses the progression of images of Aborigines as similar to that suffered by Amerindians: '"savage', 'doomed', 'drunk' and now 'environmentalist' ".

brochures pander to the ways in which tourists perceive Aboriginal people to be, though when they confront the reality of contemporary Aborigines, they are disappointed, and view modern Aborigines as corrupted (Burchett 1993). It can be seen that tourist advertising appropriates images of Aboriginal people, and portrays them as ancient, in order to secure a long history for a relatively new country.

John Ah Kit has a different opinion as to why tourist brochures concentrate on timeless images of Aboriginal people. He argues that such images are 'safe', as by portraying the ancient or timeless, one does not have to confront the contemporary reality of Aboriginal poverty, disease, low life expectancy, poor education and employment opportunities. He states that tourism in Australia generally ignores Aboriginal history and its engagement with, and resistance to, colonial powers. When people are confronted by a shared history of colonialism, they are uncomfortable, so tourism chooses to ignore this aspect of Australian history, and keeps Aboriginal people timeless (Ah Kit 1994).[5] Similarly, at a conference on Aborigines and tourism, it was pointed out that there was a link between tourism and the Mabo decision in the High Court, whereby the court recognised native title to land, and overturned the doctrine of *terra nullius* which stated that when Australia was colonised, it was an 'empty' country, i.e. Aborigines did not own the land. This decision is

[5] These ideas are akin to Fabian's analysis of colonialism and the notion of coevalness (two bodies sharing the same time). He argues that time is used by colonial powers and anthropologists in order to distance indigenous people (the Other) from the observer. Drawing on the physical rule that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time, Fabian identifies three responses to dealing with the paradox of sharing space with indigenous people: remove the Other, divide the space, or assign a different time to the Other (Fabian 1983: 25-33). Portrayal of indigenous people as stone-age people, timeless, ancient and traditional obviously serves the third strategy, though it can be seen that all three strategies have been used by the Australian (or British) government in their dealings with Aboriginal people in different historical periods.

at the heart of reconciliation in Australia, without which marketing Australia and Aboriginal culture to the world is a deception (ATSIC et al 1993). As indigenous rights have come to the forefront of international politics in recent years, Australia must be seen to have made restitution for past injustices, and to be forging reconciliation between Aborigines and Europeans. The Australian government is concerned that critical media portrayal of the treatment of Aborigines will negatively affect tourism to Australia for the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Implementation of the Deaths in Custody Report

Following the Deaths in Custody Report, many tourism commissions and Aboriginal agencies advocated Aboriginal participation in tourism, and produced strategies to facilitate this. As early as 1988, the Northern Territory had appointed an officer dedicated to Aboriginal tourism (NTTC 1996). Aboriginal involvement in tourism took several forms: as employers; as employees; as investors; as joint venture partners; providing indigenous cultural products; and providing mainstream cultural products. A series of guidelines were produced to facilitate this, including training for Aboriginal people; investment advice; advice to employers of Aboriginal people; market research into tourist demand for Aboriginal products; development of a national authenticity label to protect Aboriginal artefacts; and supporting the use of regional images of Aboriginal people instead of the portrayal of a pan-Aboriginality (ATSIC and the Office of National Tourism 1997).

The Northern Territory Tourism Commission (NTTC) also produced tourism masterplans, and an educational video offering advice to Aboriginal

communities wanting to participate in tourism. It aimed for Aboriginal tourism ventures that were 'financially and culturally sustainable, the quality of visitor experiences of cultural tourism will be consistently excellent, greater employment opportunities will exist for Aboriginal people in the tourism industry, and the Northern Territory tourism industry and broader community will be more knowledgeable about Aboriginal culture and associated issues' (NTTC 1996). The NTTC was keen that Aboriginal people should be encouraged to share their culture with visitors, but also that they entered tourism ventures at a pace that ensured economic survival. Aborigines were encouraged to 'capitalise on the growing global interest in indigenous cultures' (NTTC 1994). Burchett (1992) has argued that Aborigines also welcomed participation in tourism, as they saw it as a means to control tourist access to their land, and they could use tourism to educate visitors about Aboriginal culture and show that their traditions were strong. This concurs with Morphy's (1983) discussion of the display of sacred objects at Elcho Island, where Aborigines were asserting that they, too, had important cultural traditions which they were willing to share. Burchett points out that concomitantly, Aboriginal children were educated in their traditional culture, and were more likely to remain on traditional lands as there was employment for them.[6] Tourism was also a means to counteract negative stereotypes of Aboriginal people (Burchett 1992).

The reality was far from the social and economic panacea it was hoped to be. By 1996, Craig Catchlove, acting officer for Aboriginal tourism at the

[6] Similar sentiments were expressed at the opening of the Nyangatjatjara College in Yulara. Charlie Walkabout said that improved educational facilities meant that young people could find jobs in tourism, and thereby remain in their traditional communities.

NTTC, told me that all Aboriginal tourism ventures in the Northern Territory had failed, or had suspended operations. (He excluded Anangu Tours as they were propped up financially by the Ayers Rock Resort Company). The one exception to this was the Wallace Rockhole Community, 120 kms outside Alice Springs.[7] Martin (1995) has asserted that 87% of ATSIC funded ventures fail. In the next section, I will suggest why Aboriginal tourism was so problematic.

Problems of Aboriginal Tourism Ventures

The major problem was that interest in Aboriginal cultural tourism was overstated. Although the 1990 Australia Council survey revealed 70% of international visitors expressed an interest in Aboriginal culture, by 1992 the same survey found this figure reduced to only 49%. There was less interest from domestic tourists, the very people Aborigines were hoping to educate about Aboriginal culture (NTTC 1994).[8] The size of Aboriginal involvement was very small: in 1997 there were only 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism businesses, and indigenous employment in the industry amounted to only 1500 persons. Revenue from indigenous tourism was $5M per annum; however Aboriginal ownership of mainstream operations, predominantly accommodation and transport, was worth $20-$30M p.a. By

[7] Before deciding to embark on a tourism venture, the entire community at Wallace Rockhole asserted their commitment to the project. Although only certain members of the community conduct interpretative tours, others are employed in the store and in maintaining the campground. I think the success of the community is that it is accessible without a permit; the tourist campground is clean, grassy and provided with excellent shower and toilet facilities; the community has tarmacked roads, thereby reducing the dust; and all of the houses are surrounded by attractive flowering shrubs. The community is also very friendly. Long-term investigation and monitoring of this community would be highly beneficial.

contrast, arts and crafts were worth $200M p.a., approximately half of these sales occurring in the tourism market (ATSIC and the Office of National Tourism 1997). It was also revealed that although visitors were interested in Aboriginal culture, they were more interested in Aboriginal lifestyle, religion and food; and less interested in dance, art and performances. Further, visitors wanted contact with Aborigines, but not too close, and not for too long: tourists preferred to reinforce their stereotypes of Aboriginal people rather than have them challenged and were unwilling to face contemporary issues in Aboriginal culture (Harron and Weiler 1992).

There were a number of specific reasons why Aboriginal communities found engagement with tourism too difficult, and so either ceased or suspended operations just a few years after tourism was heralded as a cure-all for social ills. These reasons are: cultural conflict and deterioration; funding of businesses; demands of tourism industry specifically; training, skills and education; and language.

There are several ideological reasons which make tourism and Aboriginal culture incompatible. Tourism is essentially a product of Western capitalism, and this is at odds with Aboriginal ideologies concerning reciprocity and obligation. Myers (1982) has discussed how it is necessary to ask permission before entering another group's land, but that permission is rarely refused. Asking underlines the autonomy of the individuals being asked, yet also stresses the obligation to share resources in a harsh landscape. The ability to move over extensive distances simply through the formality of

[8] Chris Ryan (pers. comm.) gave tourists in Katherine a list of activities and asked them to rank them by preference. The highest ranking Aboriginal activity was number 15, behind seeing crocodiles.

asking permission also underlines the autonomy of those asking: they have the freedom to more at will as access to resources is rarely refused. By contrast, tourism replaces 'always ask' with hard currency. Many tourists have the expectation that having paid for cultural tourism products, they are then at liberty to do as they wish. Aboriginal people feel that though they share their resources with tourists, tourists do not reciprocate. As money received from tourism is mediated through outside brokers, Aboriginal people do not receive recompense on a one-to-one basis, and so do not recognise that work for tourists results directly in an income (CLC *et al* 1991: 6).

There is also a basic misunderstanding of the motives of tourists. For Aborigines, though they may have rights to live in distant areas, nevertheless there is a limit to the distances they will travel: at some point they enter land which is totally unfamiliar to them thereby making survival difficult, and encountering strangers brings the risk of sorcery. Tourists, however, visit completely alien lands. Further, Aborigines recognise that they have obligations towards the land they visit: to maintain it and its associated Dreaming. Tourists do not share this sense of responsibility for lands they visit. For them, tourism is a leisure activity, disconnected from notions of obligation and responsibility. It has already been shown in chapter three, that Anangu have highlighted their attitude towards the land using *Tjukurpa* stories: strangers who enter the land and do not adopt the appropriate mien of responsibility and circumspection bring catastrophe.

Aboriginal attitudes towards capitalist endeavours also reflect a distinctively hunter-gatherer approach, seeing resources as there to be exploited without interfering with individuals' personal autonomy. Bird -

David (1992) has explored this with regard to the South Indian Nayaka. She describes how the Nayaka, though pursuing a hunter-gatherer mode of subsistence, also exploit other opportunities when they arise, including agriculture and wage labour. Bird-David writes:

> [I]n spite of appearances, wage work was for Nayaka just another means of gaining food (and other material requirements), combined as the opportunities arose, and in no fixed way, with hunting and gathering ... They worked least during February and March, when ample forest produce was available, and most during the rainy season. They often absented themselves from work in the early days of the week, after they had received the previous week's wages on the Saturday, and during September, after they had received the annual bonus at the end of August

Thus, wage work was seen as another resource to be exploited as and when the need arose. Myers has also documented this hunter-gatherer attitude towards resources. He discusses the example of an Aboriginal woman health worker, who was considered highly intelligent and competent but was a reluctant worker, often refusing to give medical treatment to those who had suffered accidents, preferring only to hold clinics at regular times. However, others' calls for help at other times seriously interfered with her foraging and travelling activities, and thereby started to undermine her personal autonomy. Myers comments, 'With the exception of ritual duties, the sacrifice of an individual's interests and personal obligations for the continuing performance

of a task supposed to contribute generally to "community welfare" has little precedence or significance in traditional Pintupi life' (1991: 278).

Cultural obligations may conflict with the demands of tourism. Cultural tourism products have to be available every day of the year. Obviously this conflicts with demands such as initiations and ceremonies, or 'sorry time' where relatives of a dead person must remove themselves for mourning for weeks at a time. One business that has recognised the importance of cultural obligations is Desert Tracks, a tour company operating from the Ayers Rock tourist resort. Established in 1988 as a joint venture, the company received ATSIC funding to buy out the non-Aboriginal partners, though it is still managed by a non-Aboriginal woman, the only non-Aboriginal employee. The company ceases operations between December and February, to allow for participation in ceremonies. The company also limits itself to catering for only 200 visitors a year. Obviously its financial viability is in question (Commonwealth Department of Tourism 1994). Protection of cultural intellectual property may also lead such companies to refuse entry to their tours to journalists, writers, anthropologists and others who are deemed to have a professional interest. Even if such people are holidaying, they find they have to sign a contract declaring such an interest, and may be refused entry to the tour. Those who are allowed to continue may be coerced into signing an agreement stating that they will not write about anything they see or learn on the tour. Tourists often find such provisions intimidating. Related to this issue is the problem of gaining access to Aboriginal land: permits must be applied for, some of which may take weeks to be processed. Often tourists

organising their own holidays, as opposed to those arranged fully by their travel agent, are unaware that such permits must be obtained.

Some writers have cited tourism as deleterious to Aboriginal culture, despite the fact that many initially saw tourism as a way to preserve cultural traditions, to educate about Aboriginal culture, and a means to keep young people employed on their traditional lands. Altman (1993) discusses the way tourist trespass onto sacred sites may have a negative impact on religious beliefs. In national parks, high visitor numbers may result in Aboriginal communities becoming unwilling to pursue traditional subsistence activities. Such cultural impacts may outweigh any economic benefits. Dillon argues that as Aboriginality is seen as a resource, there may be a basis for compensation claims where tourism causes cultural deterioration (cited in Allen, Altman and Owen 1991). In contrast to mining, where compensation is paid for environmental deterioration, and Aborigines are paid a percentage of the income from mining minerals, there are no such provisions in tourism, where there is no guaranteed income, even for those who own the land. There is also a marked difference in royalty payments to Aborigines for mining on Aboriginal land, compared with Aboriginal ownership of national parks (Altman 1988).

Ideological conflicts aside, there are a several practical hurdles associated with tourism. Capital for business ventures is scarce as Aboriginal communities typically suffer from high levels of poverty and unemployment (Altman 1993). Funding for Aboriginal tourism businesses is provided by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Initially funding was only provided for communities wanting to participate in tourism, not to

individuals, couples or families. This provision failed to acknowledge that there is unlikely to be community agreement on business matters, and that businesses run according to community council decisions are likely to stifle individual entrepreneurial flair. This means of funding has now been changed so that groups smaller than communities may apply for funding. Also, funding for new businesses lasted for only twelve months, despite the fact that it is recognised that tourism ventures are notorious for taking between three and five years to become established, and typically have high start-up costs which will not be recouped for many years. Consequently, new ventures failed owing to lack of financial support in the critical first years (ATSIC 1994). The tourist industry as a whole is suspicious of new ventures, regarding them as unreliable, and so tour agents and wholesalers are reluctant to endorse the product until it has been operating for several years. Businesses that are successful in their initial years of trading often find funding withdrawn, thereby creating insurmountable cash flow problems. There is an incentive for the business not to be commercially successful.

The rare examples of successful cultural tourism products are joint ventures between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners. Often such ventures are preceded by thorough market research and sound knowledge of product retailing and development. There is also better knowledge about the tourism industry generally, so potential problems may be addressed prior to the commencement of a venture. The success of such businesses may lie in the fact that there is individual specialisation within the business: Aborigines concentrate on cultural production, whereas non-Aborigines control financial matters. Ellanna, Loveday, Stanley and Young argue that most Aboriginal

businesses are not commercially successful unless outside management is brought in, but the consequence of this is Aboriginal loss of control over their own businesses (cited in Allen, Altman and Owen 1991) However, funding for such businesses is problematic. Aboriginal groups are opposed to non-Aborigines funding Aboriginal cultural products, and government funding is not available to joint ventures (Altman and Finlayson 1992).

Apart from the costs of setting up such businesses, and running them for several years before they are profitable, there are specific problems associated with the tourism industry which Aboriginal people are ill-equipped to deal with. The industry as a whole is unforgiving and suspicious of any new ventures. This attitude was compounded when Aboriginal tourism ventures failed: those that survived were treated with increased suspicion, thereby taking longer to become profitable. The NTTC Aboriginal Tourism Strategy was forced to concede in 1996 that 'there is a significant and disabling lack of confidence in the wider tourism industry, frequently but not always misplaced, about the quality and reliability of Aboriginal tourism product'. One tour agent I interviewed said she would never book her clients onto an Aboriginal tour, as she had no confidence that the business would still be operating by the time her clients arrived, or that the Aboriginal employees would turn up.

Tourism is a demanding industry, often requiring employees to work long, unsociable hours.[9] Tourists themselves may be rude (intentionally or not), aggressive, ignorant, demanding, hostile and raucous. Many Aboriginal people find themselves ill-equipped to deal with such people. Their sociability

[9]See chapter six: *piranpa* for a detailed analysis of the experiences of those who work in the tourist resort of Yulara.

may make it difficult for Aborigines to refuse tourists their requests, and this may conflict with cultural norms. For example, tourists may request to take photographs of Aborigines, often bribing them with cash or cigarettes, or they make ask culturally inappropriate questions about death, initiations and rituals. Men may be asked about women's business and vice versa. One community that has overcome these problems to a certain extent is Ipolera, near Alice Springs, where tourists are divided by gender. The men are escorted by Herman Malbunka, the women are taken by his wife Mavis, each explaining the relevant 'business', and tourists are implored not to discuss what they have learned with their partners (Innes 1995). Unfortunately, Mavis is much more confident talking to strangers than Herman, and consequently male and female tourists have vastly different opinions as to the success of the venture. The 1991 Northern Territory Tourism Industry Training Council survey of Aboriginal training needs pointed out that this venture is not profitable: in 1990 there were only 500 visitors to Ipolera. By 1996, they had suspended operations.

Aboriginal people need training in running businesses, and need time to become accustomed to the demands of tourism. Some may have to acquire basic skills such as time-keeping and literacy.[10] They may also need specific training, such as acquiring driving licences for passenger vehicles. Some are precluded from this because they have lost licences owing to drink driving convictions. Vehicles can be a source of contention: if they are garaged within communities they may be seen as a community resource, and whoever holds

[10]Cf. V.L. Smith's assertion that tourism as a means of modernisation is favoured where 'significant segments of the population have minimal education or technical skills' as participation in other industries may entail substantial training (1989: xi).

the keys may find kinship and cultural obligations are pressed upon him for the loan of the vehicle. Vehicles also require daily valeting in order to pass transport inspectors' tests: this may not be easily achievable in remote communities with little in the way of water resources.

Often Aboriginal people are embarrassed because they do not have sufficient language facility to speak to tourists without an interpreter. Interpreters fluent in Aboriginal languages are not only expensive and difficult to find, but they are often tempted to elaborate on the information supplied to tourists by the Aboriginal guide. In these instances, the Aboriginal people are present as exotic objects to be gawked at, but are essentially voiceless. Aboriginal guides may also be embarrassed by tourists trying to be friendly, but unaware of the limited world experience of their guides. On one tour operated by Anangu Tours, a tourist asked about similarities between Aboriginal people and Maories, and was horrified to discover her Aboriginal guides had never heard of New Zealand. As one Anangu man explained to me, "I've never been out of Mutitjulu. To go to Adelaide: that's a big adventure for a blackfella like me." He was disbelieving of my explanations that 'my country' was a long way north of Darwin.

In addition to these practical considerations must be added the realities of tourism to Australia. For many international visitors, they are on highly organised tour programs which typically encompass the 'Australian triangle' of Sydney, Ayers Rock and Cairns. Even if such visitors wanted to experience Aboriginal cultural tours, their travelling program may not allow for alterations. Also, many Aboriginal communities are situated in remote regions, accessible only by rough tracks that require a four wheel drive vehicle and

considerable dedication. The majority of tourists, even if they had the time to spare, are daunted by such journeys, so the numbers of tourists wanting to take up offers of Aboriginal cultural tours is likely to be small. However, even though the demand for tours is small, the minimum necessary capital and initial expenses to start such a business could encompass the cost of a vehicle, training of guides, payment of interpreters, telephone, fax and answering machine, and printing and distribution of brochures and promotional material.

To illustrate the problems involved with Aboriginal tourism ventures, even if participants are dedicated to the project, I will give the case study of Docker River.

Case Study: Docker River

The Docker River community is situated on the Western Australia/ Northern Territory border, approximately 200 kms from Uluṟu. In 1993, an eco-tour company operating from the Ayers Rock resort at Yulara wished to commence day and camping tours from Uluṟu to the Docker River community, and into the surrounding area of the Petermann Ranges. Negotiations were held with the community, which was welcoming of the proposal, as it would bring useful income to community members. From then on, negotiations were conducted through the Central Land Council, and a draft agreement was drawn up. The provisions of the agreement were: no firewood to be collected on Aboriginal land, but equally no firewood was to be brought onto Aboriginal land; tour vehicles were to carry firearms which could only be used by Aboriginal guides; all insurances were to be paid for by the tour company; there was a fee of $100 per day to enter the land, and a further $100 per

Aboriginal guide. A minimum of two Aboriginal guides had to be present. If Aboriginal guides did not turn up for the tour, or if only one guide presented him/herself, the tour was to cease: it could not continue on Aboriginal land without two accompanying Aboriginal guides. There was to be no photography whilst on Aboriginal land, and tourist entry to the community was only for the purposes of refuelling the tour vehicle and collecting the Aboriginal guides.

In practice, the tour became too expensive to run, not only because vehicle costs, wages and payment for entering the land were high; but also because three seats had to be allocated in the tour vehicle for the two Aboriginal guides, and one seat for the non-Aboriginal driver bringing tourists in from Uluru. On two occasions Aboriginal guides failed to turn up (on one occasion it was discovered they had been waiting in the wrong place for the tour vehicle) and the non-Aboriginal driver/guide, having driven 200 kms down a rough, corrugated track, decided to conduct the tour rather than turn back. On one occasion, Aboriginal guides did arrive, but spent the day eating the food provided, killing a perentie and ignoring the tourists! The danger of having to cancel the tour owing to non-appearance of guides, necessitating full refunds, and consequent loss of confidence in the product made it unviable and the scheme was abandoned..

When it became apparent that Aboriginal involvement in cultural tourism was difficult, many Aboriginal and tourism organisations elected to champion cultural centres as a means for Aboriginal people to participate in tourism, and to record and preserve cultural resources. This was given a further impetus by the success of the Tjapukai cultural centre in Cairns, and

the Uluru cultural centre. However, a 1996 survey found that use of cultural centres by tourists reduced their use by Aboriginal communities. There was an essential disparity between the way Aboriginal communities viewed cultural centres (as cultural projects) and the way government agencies viewed them (as profit making businesses) (Finlayson 1996). This then led to an unwillingness on the part of government agencies to fund cultural centres, if they were primarily to be a community resource, and not a source of income, bearing in mind the cost of building cultural centres (ATSIC & the Office of National Tourism 1997). Despite this, a new cultural centre was opened in Sydney in 1998. This cultural centre alerts visitors to the fact that there are over 200 different Aboriginal dialectical tribes in Australia, and celebrates the distinctions between them. Similarly to the Tjapukai centre, the National Aboriginal Cultural Centre is a joint venture between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal investors. Aboriginal people are responsible for cultural integrity and authenticity.

Arts and crafts

Even before the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in 1991, Jon Altman was suggesting that the only appropriate participation in the tourism industry for the majority of Aboriginal people was in the arts and crafts industry. In a government sponsored review in 1989, Altman found that the arts and crafts industry was culturally sustainable, but needed government funding to be economically sustainable. Funding was necessary to overcome problems such as the remote locations of the producers, and to establish community owned marketing operations. Once

again, Altman emphasised the point that government funding must continue until the product is commercially viable. At the time of the report, funding typically allowed for the initial twelve months of capital purchases, wages, training and development of a product, and then was withdrawn as soon as the product was available for sale (Altman and Finlayson 1992). Altman and Finlayson discuss how ongoing support is available from the Aboriginal Arts Unit of the Australia Council, which protects Aboriginal craft producers from market findings that would deteriorate the cultural integrity of the product, for example, requests from international tourists that artefacts be made small enough to fit into a suitcase. Funding enables producers to resist such pressures (1992). Burchett (1992) discusses how Maruku arts and crafts at Uluru had managed to avoid making modified artefacts for the tourism industry. However, in 1997 miniature men's business kits, measuring approximately 12 inches were made and sold at the Uluru cultural centre, and postcard sized dot paintings were also mass produced by Anangu artists, who could be seen splodging dots of one colour randomly onto a dozen tiny canvases in front of them, before taking up another colour and repeating the process. Similarly, Finlayson found in Cairns that tourists tended to see Aboriginal artefacts only in terms of boomerangs and didgeridoos, and this determined what artists produced, therefore responding to demands (cited in Allen, Altman and Owen 1991).

There was a dramatic increase in the amount of Aboriginal art produced during the 1980s, when it also came to be recognised as fine art, and the industry grew by 33% per annum. In 1987-88, the arts and crafts industry netted $7m, paid to 4,800 artists; the average income being $1500 per annum.

Altman points out that participation in the arts and crafts industry makes a significant impact on Aboriginal communities, providing a useful income supplement, and cost-effective employment. He advocates participation in the arts and crafts industry, rather than other tourism businesses, as it does not conflict with cultural demands; can be practised by any member of the community; can be done part-time; and needs little initial capital in order to commence production. It is appropriate for those living in remote communities. (cited in Allen, Altman and Owen 1991).

Henrietta Fourmile (1996) discusses the development of tourist interest in Aboriginal art. She points out that Elkin described the art of Central Australia as crude, but now this art is highly prized. Unfortunately, it has also come to be much more prominent than art produced by other Aboriginal groups, and art by urban Aborigines has been largely neglected. However, for Central Australian producers, it has been liberating, not only through reinforcing a sense of identity and cultural pride, but also artists have come to learn about world travel through attendance at international exhibitions. Despite this, though, Fourmile regrets that Aboriginal artists participate in the industry primarily as producers, and she calls for their participation as guides, writers, retailers, owners and administrators.

Thomas also discusses the nature of indigenous art, seeing it as restricted by Western perceptions of it. He argues that indigenous art is only valued as such as long as it corresponds to a Western, primitive, romantic stereotype. Innovation, or experimentation with Western techniques, is viewed negatively. In Australia, however, he argues that Aborigines have used

art to make political statements about their identity.[11] Thomas says that artists blend traditional and Western art techniques in order to demonstrate the dynamism and strength of Aboriginal culture. Several urban Aboriginal artists, he says, have used the traditional forms of Aboriginal art in order to portray an ethnography of how Aborigines have been represented by Westerners (Thomas 1995).

Intellectual property remains a concern to Aboriginal artists and communities. The Attorney-General's Department produced a paper that discussed the exploitation of indigenous designs by the tourist souvenir industry, and calls for the 1968 Copyright Act to be extended to cover indigenous intellectual property. However, this is problematic when ownership is vested in a community. Also, copyright must be presented in material form, so does not cover oral story telling, dance or songs. One measure designed to combat appropriation of indigenous designs is the authenticity trade mark. Fogerty also engages with the problem of Aboriginal intellectual property and how it may be affected by tourism. He discusses the way in which elders in communities decide what is appropriate for display to tourists: most stories and paintings have 'open' versions which may be safely shown to anyone, with more sacred versions being reserved for those who have reached the required level of initiation (see also Morphy 1991). This enables Aboriginal communities to participate in tourism, to educate tourists about their culture, without degrading their spirituality (both Fogerty and Attorney-General's Legal Practice are cited in Roach and Bek 1995).

[11] See also chapter three: *Tjukurpa*.

In summary, Aboriginal participation in tourism is far from being the social and economic panacea it was hoped to be. It would appear that the most successful means of engaging with the tourism industry is through the production of arts and crafts, which is suitable for those living in remote communities, can be done part time, and does not conflict with other cultural obligations. Further, with the development of community organised wholesalers, such as Maruku operating from Mutitjulu, Aboriginal producers are more likely to receive adequate payment for their art, and may be protected from the worst excesses of market demand which would have a detrimental effect on cultural integrity.

The next section will examine the case of tourism at Uluru, and will investigate the opinions and expectations of both tourists and Anangu about each other.

Tourism at Uluru

Altman uses the example of Uluru to highlight what he terms the paradoxes of Aboriginal involvement in tourism. He notes that in the Northern Territory tourism depends on Aboriginal owned land: Kakadu and Uluru are the two most visited attractions in the Territory. The Northern Territory is marketed on the basis of its unique Aboriginal culture. However, the Northern Territory government was fiercely opposed to Aboriginal land rights, and to the handback of Kakadu and Uluru. As Aboriginality is such a resource for the Northern Territory tourism industry, many Aboriginal groups have been encouraged to set up tourism ventures. However, as tourism increases, the landowners will become progressively more powerful in the Northern

Territory political economy. Uluṟu is a good example of this paradox, being the most visited tourist attraction in the Northern Territory, an international icon for Australia itself, and owned by Aboriginal people. To further the complexity, the tourist infrastructure is not owned by Aṉangu, but was built by the Northern Territory government, which only sold its holding in late 1997. Thus, the Northern Territory government had control of the tourist facilities and reaped the majority of the income from tourism to Uluṟu (Altman 1989).

Tourism at Uluṟu has been imposed upon Aṉangu, who, recognising it as inevitable, have engaged with tourism in a variety of ways. As chapter two details the development of Aṉangu tourism ventures, I will simply give a brief précis here. Although Aṉangu had been removed from the land in 1950s, they returned to Uluṟu in 1970s and set up a store, petrol station and a permanent camp. In addition to the store and petrol station, close to the tourist accommodation that was at that time situated within the National Park, Aṉangu also operated a craft outlet and a mobile canteen at the base of the climb. When the tourist resort of Yulara was constructed in 1984, Aṉangu continued to keep the Mutitjulu community open to tourists wishing to buy petrol, snacks and souvenirs. However, tourism became too intrusive, and the community was closed in 1986, even though this meant that the Aṉangu businesses faltered. Rowse (1992) indicates that the closure of the community underlined the fact that the businesses were primarily services for the convenience of Aṉangu, and were only secondarily profit making ventures and services to the tourism industry. This accords with Bird-David's (1992) analysis of hunter-gatherer attitudes towards wage work as an additional resource.

There are specific opportunities for Anangu, as their land is a national park. The Park is run according to joint management practices, recognising the importance of both white and Anangu systems of knowledge. Sally Weaver (1984), examining joint management in Coburg and Kakadu National Parks, says that Aborigines see Parks as 'total institutions' providing a range of services for Aboriginal people, such as welfare; housing; preservation of their culture; telephone communications; electricity and water. She argues that Aboriginal participation may be better in interpretation than in resource management, whatever the ideology of joint management. Weaver says that in resource management, scientific models always take priority over indigenous models, and that indigenous means of controlling the land (e.g. patch burning) are only utilised as long as science ratifies them. Szabo lists several benefits of joint management generally: the enormous body of indigenous knowledge on natural species becomes available to Westerners; provision of indigenous understanding of cultural sites; alternative models of the environment; improved experience for tourists; alternative histories of the area; development of contemporary medicines from traditional knowledge and the possibility of commercial food production (e.g. acacia seeds, quandongs). The benefits to Aboriginal people he lists as: access to mainstream employment; availability of less formal employment such as consultancies and contract work; self esteem through employment and the recognition of Aboriginal knowledge; improved access to education and training; strengthened social structure in communities; and the portrayal of a positive image of Aboriginal people, their knowledge and culture (Szabo 1994).

At Uluṟu, Aṉangu have been involved in joint management as board members, consultants, rangers, labourers and in provision of interpretation within the Park. The Park provides housing, electricity, water, roads, television, radio, training and employment to those in the Muṯitjulu community. Aṉangu, anxious to provide accurate information about their lives and culture to tourists, have developed a number of interpretative projects within the Park. Firstly, Aṉangu set up the Liru walk in 1986, to demonstrate the traditional Aṉangu lifestyle and bush tucker to tourists. In order to provide a more intimate atmosphere for learning, the tour was limited to fifteen tourists, and was often fully booked days in advance (Nesbitt 1989). The benefits of the tour were that Aṉangu could control what was taught to tourists; tourists had confidence in the authenticity of the information they received; and deep respect for Aṉangu culture was fostered. The white rangers who accompanied Aṉangu on the tours, acting as interpreters, also gained greater insights into Aṉangu understanding of the land. Following the success of the Liru tour, two further tours were established: the Kuniya and Mala tours, which were led by Aṉangu and rangers. These tours were a useful source of supplementary income for Aṉangu. Further, many of those who were conducting a tour took their children with them: this was a good way of training younger Aṉangu about the work of rangers, and the role of Aṉangu in interpretation within the Park. It also assisted Aṉangu in understanding tourism.

Another interpretative project for Aṉangu was the film 'Uluṟu: An Aṉangu Story' which was commissioned and directed by Aṉangu in order to tell their history associated with Uluṟu, and detailing the progress of the

handback negotiations. Anangu themselves acted in the film, representing events from their history such as the arrival of the first white person and interactions with doggers. The film also relates *Tjukurpa* stories, and Anangu discuss their attachments to the land. The benefits of the film are that it presents Anangu culture in a medium that is familiar to Westerners, and it is possible to reach large numbers of people with the film. A special version has been created for use in schools. Also, Anangu have retained all copyright in the film (Nesbitt 1989). The production of this film also demonstrates Anangu understanding of Westerners, and the best way to ensure their attention. Anangu commented, 'We knew it would be a way to get the message across because of the way whitefellas watch TV' (quoted in CLC *et al* 1991: 13).

1995 was an important year for Anangu: not only was it the tenth anniversary of the handback of the land, but this was marked by the opening of the Cultural Centre, a project that had been mooted since Anangu knew their land was to be returned to them. The Cultural Centre was designed and built by Anangu themselves, and they decided on the interpretative displays: on *Tjukurpa*; traditional hunting and gathering techniques; and the role of Anangu in managing the National Park. In the same year, Anangu also set up their own tourism business, Anangu Tours.

Case study: Anangu Tours

Anangu Tours is an interesting example of the problems that are faced by Aboriginal tourism businesses. It also holds a unique situation, being supported by both a major resort, and a national park. Anangu Tours is owned by an Aboriginal business and managed and operated by white managers. It is

funded by both ATSIC money and the Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation. Recognising the popularity of the Liru and Kuniya interpretative walks, it was decided to make these the basis for a commercial tourism operation. This was not without hostility from the Mutitjulu community, where Anangu rangers saw the walks as their province, and a way of teaching the children 'whitefella' skills. Antagonism arose between those working for Anangu Tours, and those working as Park rangers. In his guided tour of the Cultural Centre, the ranger Rupert Goodwin explains the Mala story, and tells tourists, "If you want to know about Mala, come with me tomorrow morning on the Mala walk. If you come with me, it is free. If you go with Anangu Tours, you pay dollars." The walks were marketed as Aboriginal cultural tourism product, and cost $65 for the Kuniya sunset walk, and $78 for the Liru sunrise tour, which included breakfast in the Cultural Centre.

Infrastructure for the new business was provided by a variety of sources. Firstly, the National Park, wishing to encourage Aboriginal enterprise and employment opportunities, provided free office space in the ranger station, and in the Cultural Centre. The Cultural Centre office operates as a booking office for Anangu Tours. The Park also built new walking tracks for the tours, and constructed shade shelters where Anangu Tours can demonstrate traditional tool making. The Ayers Rock Resort, realising that at Uluru tourists expected to experience Aboriginal cultural tours, supported the venture by the provision of a rent-free booking office within the Touring and Information Centre in the Yulara shopping square. In the initial year of trading, the resort also allowed Anangu Tours space on their marketing display at the Australian Tourism Exchange (A.T.E.). Usually space at this trade fair costs $4000 for a

booth, plus accommodation and travelling expenses, so free provision of this was a considerable bonus. Recognising the difficulties of garaging the tour buses within Mutitjulu community because they are likely to be borrowed for excursions to football matches, sorry time in other communities and visiting kin, and the fact that no Anangu employees had bus licences, Anangu Tours vehicles are garaged, valetted and driven by AAT Kings, which has a depot in Yulara. AAT Kings drivers collect passenger manifests, pick up the tourists and drive them into the National Park to meet their Anangu guides. Anangu Tours employs Anangu living in Mutitjulu, so they have a large employee base on which to draw to ensure that Aboriginal guides are available. Also, there are a number of Pitjantjatjara speakers in the area who can be employed as interpreters.

In 1997, Anangu Tours was included in an Ansett package which included return air fare to Ayers Rock, accommodation within the resort and the Liru sunrise tour for a set price. With endorsement from two major businesses, Ansett and the resort, and the promotion in Ansett inflight magazines and national newspapers, Anangu Tours suddenly found they were accommodating many more tourists than they had expected. Frequently over 40 people subscribed to the Liru Tour. Many of these tourists told me that they would never have taken an Aboriginal tour, but their tour was part of the entire package they had bought. They were often surprised by how much they had learned: as Australians they considered themselves knowledgeable about Aboriginal culture, or painfully aware of the social and economic problems that beset Aborigines. Anangu Tours had overcome some of these prejudices. However, inclusion in the Ansett package was not without its problems.

Anangu had agreed to participate in cultural tourism on condition that group sizes would not be too large. They had stated that they did not want to conduct tours for coaches full of tourists. Unfortunately, the Ansett package was so popular that was exactly what happened: Anangu Tours had to hire coaches and drivers from AAT Kings to transport their tourists. Anangu guides were unhappy about talking to so many people: Tiku Captain complained that she felt like she was in a zoo. In an attempt to counteract the huge numbers of tourists, it was decided to divide the tourists into smaller groups and stagger the tours. Anangu, instead of leading the tour, were allotted to staging posts, where they explained and demonstrated the same thing to one group after another. This overcame the problem of talking to large groups of tourists, but Anangu complained that they were subsequently working for much longer hours, and they did not like repeating the same thing time and time again. Once again, they felt that they were in a zoo, as groups of tourists walked past and stared. Another problem was that the tourists who took the tour would not normally have taken such a tour, and the questions they asked were often offensive. Also, such people often disregarded the request not to take photographs, and bribed Anangu with cigarettes in order to have their photographs taken with sheepish-looking, embarrassed Anangu. Tourists who were more culturally sensitive resented such behaviour: they too would like photographs but wanted to respect the wishes of their Anangu guides.

Despite the support accorded to Anangu Tours, the business struggled financially. Often the Kuniya Tour did not run because there were no bookings for it. When the tours were operated by the Park and were free of charge, they were often fully booked several days in advance. However, when the tours

cost $65 dollars, tourists found them expensive and so could not afford to take them. Market research prior to establishing the company would have revealed how much tourists would be prepared to pay to take an Aboriginal guided tour. Interpreters were problematic: when one resigned and the other went on holiday, the manager of the company had to act as interpreter for all of the tours. In 1998, the company won a Brolga tourism award for excellence in the field of Aboriginal tourism. Unfortunately the company could not afford to send a representative to the award ceremony in Darwin, and their award had to be collected on their behalf. At the same time, Anangu Tours could not afford a booth at the Australian Tourism Exchange and so were unable to attend this important marketing event. Fortunately they won tickets and space at the event from the Brolga Awards and so were able to participate.

The case of Anangu Tours highlights the problems that beset Aboriginal tourism ventures: funding, sustainability, translation, marketing, and vehicles. Despite assistance from several quarters, and the benefits of a supreme locational advantage, after three years of trading the company was still not financially secure.[12]

Tourists' attitudes towards Anangu

In 1985, the Pitjantjatjara Council, the Central Land Council and the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service sponsored a survey into the effects of tourism at Uluru. 807 tourists completed questionnaires (5% of the total number of tourists for the month of June 1985), and revealed that for

[12] The situation in 1999 is much improved: Anangu Tours have produced an integrated tour package with several other tour operators at Uluru. This demonstrates the fact that typically it takes three years before the market has confidence in a new tourism product.

67% the purpose of their journey was in order to see Uluṟu, though 91% declared themselves interested in Aboriginal culture, and 50% described themselves as well informed about Aboriginal culture. 59% supported the handback of Uluṟu to Aṉangu; 74% of these were overseas visitors (Snowdon and Alexander 1986; CLC *et al* 1991).

These statistics can be usefully compared with my own research. I conducted 100 face to face interviews with tourists at the base of the climb and in the Cultural Centre. I also collected 200 completed questionnaires from the same places. I worked as a tour guide, attended many tours and talked generally with tourists to ascertain their opinions. I also discussed my ideas with others working with tourists: guides, rangers, pilots, administrators, housekeepers. I will commence with the statistics I collected.

Interviews and questionnaires elicited that 93% of tourists knew that the Park was owned by Aṉangu, and 82 % supported this. 71% wanted or expected to have contact with Aboriginal people during their visit to the Park. 54% considered themselves well-informed about Aboriginal culture, a similar figure to the results ten years earlier. More illuminating were the responses when tourists were asked to brainstorm on the words 'Aboriginal person'. Even though participants had visited the Cultural Centre, with its displays of positive Aboriginal involvement in Park Management, tourists still adhered to stereotyped views of Aborigines: responses centred around the physical appearance of Aborigines (black, wild hair) and social problems (drunkenness, broken down cars, people denied their rights). There were more positive associations such as links to the land, and Cultural Centre respondents also

mentioned Aboriginal people as involved with nature conservation, and as Australians.

Equally interesting were the additional comments tourists made. At the base of the climb, comments elicited centred around the dangers of the climb, and arguments for or against the climb being closed in the future. At the Cultural Centre, many tourists stated they wanted to see Aboriginal people working in the Centre; other comments expressed dissatisfaction with the expense of the crafts and food; and admiration for the building's unusual design. Comments recorded in the Cultural Centre's visitors' book also called for more Aboriginal people to work in the Centre, and tourists debated with each other over whether the climb should be closed for cultural reasons. Some Australians took the opportunity to say they had learned about their fellow Australians' culture and history: one entry read "It makes me proud to be Aussie - Sydney", and an entry from a tourist from Western Australia was "Great to learn (finally) about my own culture". Once again, this can be seen as appropriation of Aboriginality in the construction of a pan-Australian history.

However, through participant observation fieldwork, it became apparent that predominantly tourists were concerned to learn about Aboriginal contemporary living conditions. Tourists asked questions about Aboriginal housing (where do they live, what do their houses look like, are there any who are still nomadic?); health (what is their life expectancy, do they use traditional medicines, where do they give birth, do they use contraception, where are they buried, why do they suffer from diabetes?); food (what do they eat, do they use supermarkets, why are they drunk, do they still use spears,

boomerangs and other traditional hunting implements?) and education (do they speak their own languages, how many speak English, where do the children go to school?). Tourists, though they may enjoy hearing *Tjukurpa* stories, NEVER ask questions about *Tjukurpa*. Tourists also demonstrated beliefs that Aboriginal people who were not nomadic and hunting with a spear had deserted their culture and were not 'real' Aborigines. Many expected to see Aboriginal people wandering through the bush, spear in hand, the archetypal noble savage. So entrenched were these images that one Anangu ranger, Leslie Kalma, complained to me that tourists were constantly approaching him and asking him where the Aborigines were! As he was wearing a ranger uniform, using a computer, clean shaven and with grey hair and light skin, he did not fit the stereotype and so was not recognised as Aboriginal. Many tourists asked me why Aboriginal people had stayed primitive, they had not taken up agriculture or jobs in the cities; and were unwilling to listen to my explanations that Aborigines were not the naked nomads they were envisioning, and that they utilised many aspects of Western technology while adhering to their traditional ideologies. It would appear that Aboriginal people are damned whatever they do: if they conform to the noble savage stereotype they are primitive and backward; if they adopt elements of Western technology and lifestyle they have neglected their culture and cannot be recognised as Aborigines. These are important considerations for Aboriginal cultural tourism.[13]

[13] The importance of these notions in forming and executing land claims legislation has been explored in chapter four.

Cordell (1993) and Sackett (1991) discuss the stereotype of the noble savage, and perceptions of Aboriginal people as arch conservationists. Sackett demonstrates how Aboriginal practices are viewed as more ecologically sympathetic than those of non-Aborigines, with the belief that Aborigines did not alter their environment, but lived in accord with nature. This can lead to conflict between conservationists and Aboriginal groups, for example when Aborigines wanted to farm buffalo at Kakadu: it was not seen as 'traditional practice' and therefore was opposed by conservationists. These conflicts show that Aboriginal communities are routinely held up for public criticism if they do not conform to a universal stereotype of unchanging, traditional, ecologically sound conservators. It is not a model that is held only by tourists. These ideas can be linked to Fabian's ideas of coevalness, whereby indigenous people are perceived as ancient, effectively pushing them into the past as they cannot be seen to be sharing the same space with western societies (1983:25-33). This may account for the contradictory statements elicited from tourists.

Discussions with rangers and guides revealed that they too had found that tourists' questions focused predominantly on the contemporary life, bodies and body maintenance of Aboriginal people. Tourists also held theories about Aboriginal drunkenness, the most sympathetic people believing that Aboriginal physiology was such that they had no tolerance for alcohol.[14] White guides often told me how tourists asked them where *they* lived, what they did for entertainment, and where they did their shopping. As staff housing is situated behind the tourist hotels, it is not apparent where the 1000

[14] Colleagues working with native Americans assure me that similar beliefs are held about their physiological low alcohol tolerance (Schreiber pers. comm.).

or so Yulara locals live. I found that tourists were fascinated by my clothing, particularly a pair of Thomas Cook bush trousers where the legs unzipped to form shorts. In summary, at Uluṟu, tourists are interested in the ways that Aṉangu and Yulara locals, survive: where they find food; where they live; what resources of water and electricity there are; what provisions there are for medical treatment. This will be discussed further in chapter seven: *nintiringkupai*.

Aṉangu attitudes towards tourism

In 1985 a survey was conducted into the economic and social impacts of tourism on Aṉangu at Uluṟu. The *Sharing the Park* survey revealed that Aṉangu were very interested in the financial benefits of tourism, one-third seeing tourists as a source of income. 83% considered that tourists should have to pay to learn about Aṉangu (Altman 1987; CLC *et al* 1991: 12). However, where Aṉangu did receive benefits from tourism, it did not improve their opinion of tourists. Paradoxically, 89% thought tourism was a good thing, but an equal number considered there were too many tourists! (Snowdon and Alexander 1986; CLC *et al* 1991: 4). Two-thirds of Aṉangu said tourists did nothing that should be forbidden: by the time of the survey there was fencing around sacred sites and photography was regulated. Although two-fifths of tourists wanted contact with Aṉangu, as Rowse points out, the more that visitor numbers increase, the less likely this is to occur. Also, the closing of the community meant not only that tourists were less likely to have contact with Aṉangu, but that Aṉangu found tourists less

comprehensible the less they encountered them. Older Anangu who previously had been employed in the tourism industry had a more positive view of tourism than younger Anangu who saw they had less control over mass tourism, and so sought involvement with tourism that was impersonal (Rowse 1992). When asked about the worst aspects of tourism, 34% of Anangu mentioned photography, which they disliked as they considered that tourists would then laugh at the poverty of Anangu, and 17% mentioned invasion of privacy. When asked what tourists should learn about Anangu, 36% said bushtucker, 21% the country and 9% mentioned *Tjukurpa* (Snowdon and Alexander 1986; CLC *et al* 1991: 12).

Regarding employment in the tourism industry, 64% of Anangu had previous experience of such employment, and 53% would like similar work in the future (Snowdon and Alexander 1986; CLC *et al* 1991: 6 ff). Altman found that 92% of Anangu thought it was a good idea to have Anangu rangers who could work with tourists, though only 15% were interested in such jobs for themselves. He also identified arts and crafts as a useful supplementary income for Anangu, especially as at the time of the survey there was a disproportionately high percentage of elderly Anangu living in Mutitjulu (14% compared with the national figure of 2.8% of Aboriginal people being over 65). Arts and crafts were used as a part-time, casual supplement to pensions (1988: 113ff). Employment was also available within the National Park, but Altman notes that Anangu were rarely in stable employment. Women were more regular Park employees than men, and a number of Park employees were pensioners (1988: 127).

My fieldwork from 1996 to 1998 revealed that Anangu attitudes towards tourism had changed from the earlier *Sharing the Park* study conducted in 1985. From only 9% of Anangu thinking that tourists should learn about *Tjukurpa* in 1985, by 1996 the focus was on *Tjukurpa*, as demonstrated by the enormous displays in the Cultural Centre, and increasingly *Tjukurpa* was given as the reason why tourists should not climb Uluru. This is an interesting development. Jacobs (1988) has shown that Aboriginal groups who present themselves as more stereotypically traditional are more successful in land claims cases. I would have expected that in 1985, in the throes of the land claim, and facing considerable opposition to the handback of the land to Anangu, that tourists being taught about *Tjukurpa* would be a good way to underline Anangu's position as the rightful owners of the land. It is also interesting that, now the emphasis is on *Tjukurpa*, the actual number of *Tjukurpa* stories that may be related to tourists has been reduced (see chapter three). At a council meeting, Anangu discussed the importance to them of the *Tjukurpa* that they had presented in the Cultural Centre, and they wanted tourists to understand this.

Regarding participation in the National Park, the motto of the Park is *Tjunguringkula waakaripai*: working together: recognising the two laws, Anangu and whitefella, in the maintenance of the land. Under the lease agreement, the National Park is required to promote Aboriginal management and control of the Park; employ as many Aboriginal people as possible; adjust working hours and conditions to suit Aboriginal cultural demands; encourage Aboriginal business within the Park; and utilise the traditional skills of Aboriginal people in the management of the Park. This would appear to

provide excellent opportunities for Anangu. However, there is dissatisfaction on both sides over implementing these ideals. Park management have difficulty in filling positions that have been earmarked for Anangu, and those who do take up such positions often do not remain in the job long term.[15] From the Anangu perspective, they have little confidence in 'working together'. [16] Discussing the building of the Cultural Centre, Pixie stated, "Anangu are proud of the Cultural Centre. It's a good example of 'working together' and there hasn't been too much of that."

Anangu are also concerned by the way they are paid for the lease-back of the Park to Parks Australia North. Rupert Goodwin explained to me Anangu dissatisfaction with the land councils who administer the money that is received from the lease of the Park. He told me that the bureaucracy takes a portion of the money in administering it on behalf of Anangu. Rupert told me, "Anangu don't get whitefella money, proper money, they get paper money (i.e. a voucher or a statement saying how much is held for them). We never see cash, dollars. When we buy a car, the money is sent straight to the person selling. Anangu never see the money."

It can also be seen that Anangu expectations as to what they should be paid for, in their role of joint managers of the Park, are antithetical to what business practice might expect. Once again this highlights the incompatible ideologies of tourism (capitalism) and Aboriginal culture (reciprocity and

[15]Similar problems have been reported at Kakadu National Park. Lawrence discusses the lack of confidence in the Aboriginal ranger program. The program emphasises all aspects of management from administration to presentations on rock art. However, many Aborigines do not stay long in employment, and as a consequence to not reach professional levels and so are often simply ranger assistants (cited in Allen, Altman and Owen 1991).
[16]See chapter six: *piranpa* for a discussion of the Cultural Centre strike, and the damage it caused to the concept of 'working together'.

obligation).In discussions over the role Anangu should play in managing the National Park, they revealed they saw the work constituted, amongst other things: watching the country and ensuring *Tjukurpa* is observed; teaching tourists about *Tjukurpa*; keeping tourists away from sacred sites; keeping the Mutitjulu community safe and private; learning to find water; visiting family; collecting food; remembering the past and thinking about the future; bringing up children; keeping Anangu men and women safe. It can be seen that many of these proposals are more concerns for the community, and cannot realistically be addressed as part of the Park's Management Plan. Anangu also stated that they did not need whitefella knowledge in order to run the Park. Park management retorted by stating that white rangers spend much of their time dealing with tourism issues, and that Anangu could only run the Park by themselves if all the tourists were removed. This can usefully be compared with Sally Weaver's analysis of joint management of Kakadu and Cobourg National Parks, both in the Northern Territory, where she records that Aboriginal owners tend to see the Park as there to provide an array of services to Aboriginal people, and had a different understanding of the concept of a national park (1984).

Regarding Anangu perceptions of tourism, responses were mixed. Often the same person could give completely contradictory statements about tourism. For example, Tjamiwa encouraged tour guides to tell correct stories to tourists and warn them of the dangers of climbing Uluru; in private he said there should be a trench dug across the road just beyond the entry station so that tourists cannot enter the Park. When I reported to the Mutitjulu Community council on the surveys I had conducted at the base of the climb

and at the Cultural Centre, I asked Anangu if there was anything they wanted me to ask the tourists on their behalf. They were stunned by this, until eventually Jo Willmott said, "Ask them for more money." Then Barbara Tjikatu wondered if tourists would spend longer in the Cultural Centre if Anangu were there for them to talk to. Many Anangu considered that tourism had done nothing to improve their lives.[17]

Cassidy Uluru also held various opinions on tourism. If he had been called on to work long hours, he (not unreasonably!) thought being a tour guide with Anangu Tours was hard work, and he was tired. He pointed out that he had worked for other tour companies in the past, and was aware that they had paid him less in wages than they had paid to white guides. Cassidy was upset by this, as he said, "I am Uluru. This was my father's land, now it's my land, and I look after it." On other occasions he and his wife Tiku said that the Park should be run by the Northern Territory as, having worked for the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory they felt they knew 'that mob'. By contrast, Parks Australia North were unknown and so were treated with a certain amount of suspicion. On the tourists, Cassidy said, "People used to call it a kangaroo tail (the site called *ngaltawata*), but it's not, it's *ngaltawata*. They didn't know anything, they called it kangaroo tail. But now they are learning."

[17]Kesteven (1987) discusses Aboriginal perceptions of tourists at Kakadu National Park. Aborigines distinguish between visitors and tourists. Visitors are described as those who know how to behave: they may be other Aboriginal people visiting the Park; those who are there to work or to conduct research in the Park; and local Aborigines who have left to live and work in the cities but have returned for a short visit. By contrast, tourists are defined as those who wander aimlessly; get lost and have to be rescued; wander into sacred sites or burial areas; steal from sites; over-fish the rivers and cannot be trusted to act responsibly with rifles.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the development of tourism as an anthropological subject; and offered a detailed analysis of Aboriginal participation in tourism. In the 1960s and 70s tourism was heralded as a valuable development tool, but it is surprising that the 1991 Deaths in Custody Report advocated tourism as a panacea for Aboriginal social ills, as by that time, the experience of other countries had shown tourism to be problematic. Further, as Kesteven says, it cannot be said that tourism is a way for Aborigines to better themselves, as they do not feel that they have to be improved, but rather they feel they need better facilities. She argues that it is more accurate to view Aborigines as aristocratic landowners who, like the British aristocracy, endure tourism as a source of income, while seeking to control the access tourists have to certain areas of their property (Kesteven 1987).

Tourism as a source of income for Aborigines compares poorly with mining royalties. At Kakadu, the income from lease back of the Park in 1986 was $7502; compared with an annual income from mining royalties of $3 million. At Kakadu, Aboriginal ownership of mainstream tourism infrastructure (hotels, shares in an airline) was only possible as traditional owners received considerable royalties from the Ranger uranium mine. This income may be a double edged sword for Aboriginal communities, as government grants for housing may be cut if there is a considerable income from mining royalties (Altman 1989).

It is my contention that Aboriginal participation in tourism is problematic for numerous cultural, locational and educational reasons, and

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Despite this, tourists are not condemned outright by Aborigines as they see some benefits

that satisfactory engagement in mainstream employment and business will only become possible once educational possibilities are improved in remote Aboriginal communities. Tourism cannot be a quick fix, but it may be that in generations to come Aborigines will be better equipped to establish, maintain and succeed in running their own businesses on their own terms.

It has been seen that much has been written about tourism, and attitudes of indigenous people towards their guests. Despite Bruner's cry in 1989 that more attention should be paid to tour agents and tour guides, little has been written about them. The focus of my next chapter, therefore, is to redress the balance, and I describe and analyse the position and attitudes of the other people in the area at Uluru: the Park staff, and those who service the tourist resort of Yulara.

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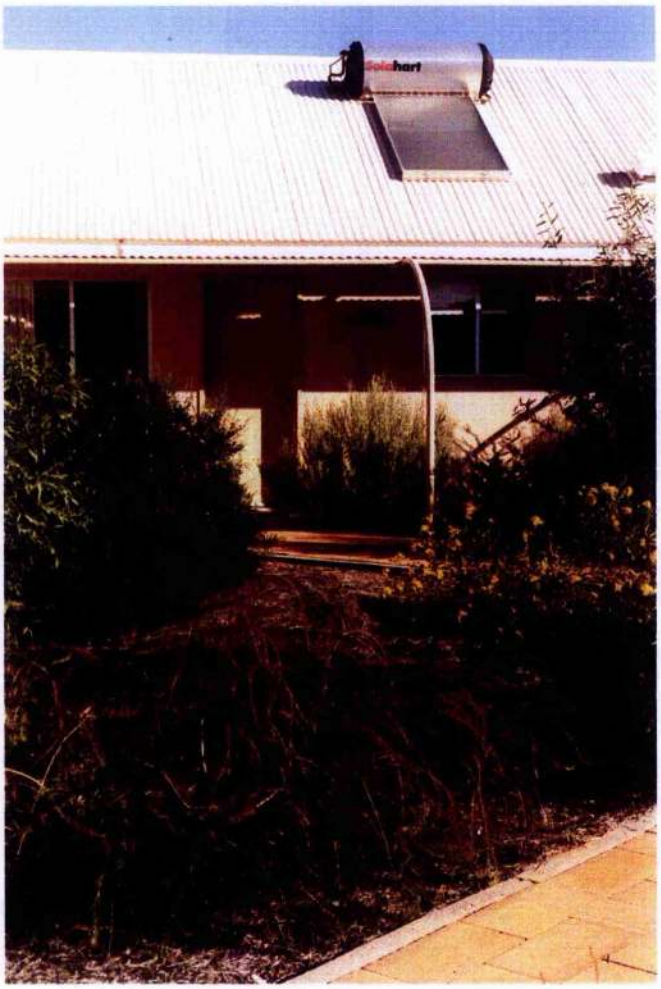
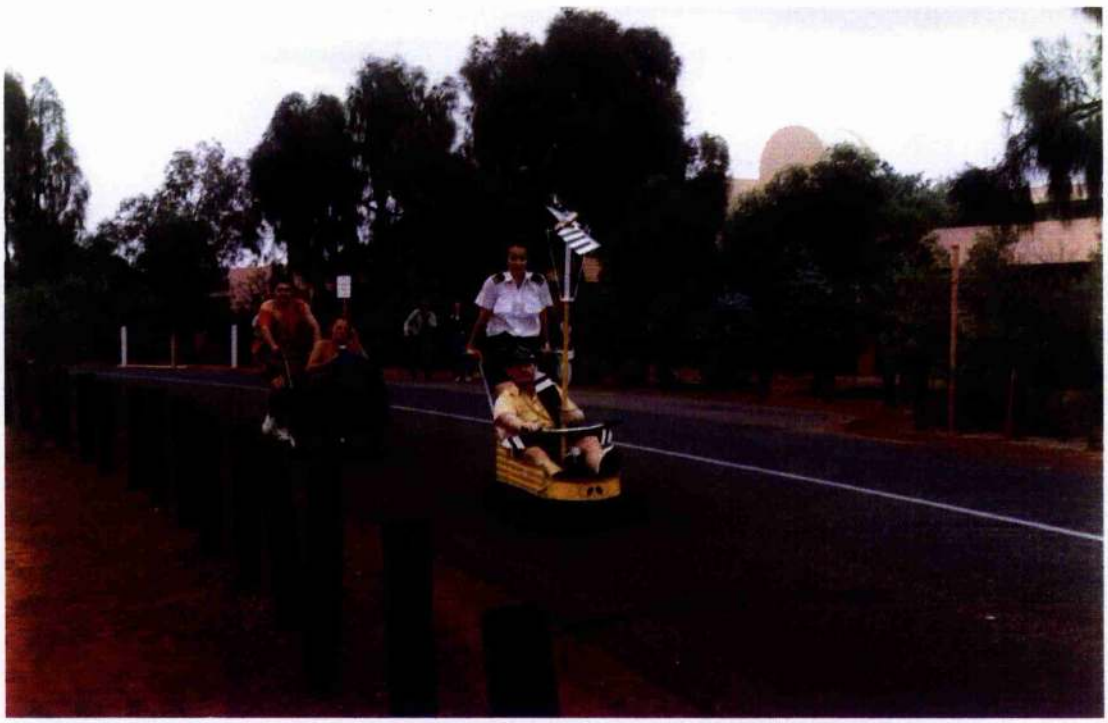
from tourism such as job prospects, access to money and vehicles.



Yulara Housing



Pram Battle

Chapter Six: *Piranpa*

"This stop for Desert Gardens Hotel, the Visitors' Centre and the Paranoia Palace." Driver of the free shuttle bus that services Yulara Resort. The 'Paranoia Palace' is the Ayers Rock Resort Company offices.

Piranpa is the Pitjantjatjara term for 'white': it is commonly used to denote 'whitefella'. In this chapter I shall examine the lives of the whitefellas working within the Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park and in the tourism industry in Yulara. The chapter is in two sections, dealing with the white rangers and Yulara locals. The term Yulara locals is used to denote all those working in the Yulara resort, as tour guides, managers, hotel staff, chefs, waiting staff, emergency services personnel etc. Very few people who live in Yulara do not work there. Those in this position are almost exclusively women with young children whose partners work in the resort. Whitefellas working for the Mutitjulu Community are included in the analysis of the rangers, though it will be seen that there are some notable distinctions between the community workers and the rangers. Various aspects of rangers' and Yulara locals' lives will be described: housing, community activities, the body, sex, attitudes to Anangu and attitudes towards tourists.

Firstly, though, I will offer an analysis of the term 'community', as it will be pertinent to the following discussion. Rapport (1996) writes that the definition of the term 'community' has been problematic in social science for the past two centuries, but we can identify two anthropological ways to approach the issue: traditional and symbolic. The traditionalists see

'community' as 'common interests between people; or a common ecology and locality; or a common social system or structure' (*op. cit.*). Symbolic approaches see 'community' as an identity marker evident when social groups express themselves in opposition to each other. The members' awareness of the symbolic boundary between groups denotes the community.

In my analysis of piranpa, aspects of both the traditional and symbolic approaches to community are pertinent. For rangers and Yulara locals together it can objectively be seen that there is a shared locality and interests. Further, that being in an isolated situation they experience common problems and work together to overcome them, thereby realising a subjective sense of 'community'. However, rather than emphasising their common concerns and difficulties, rangers and Yulara locals split into two distinctive 'communities', regarding each other with hostility. There is symbolic segmentation: each of the 'communities' sustains symbolic ideas to distinguish itself from the other. As to looking at the groups separately, it is my contention that the traditional approaches to the notion of 'community' are applicable to Yulara locals: that shared locality, isolation, problems, face to face interaction and multiplex relationships result in the formation of organisations to alleviate their many difficulties, and this results in a sense of group identity. When analysing the rangers, however, the symbolic approaches are more useful: there are few institutions through which rangers objectively secure cohesion, but they are distinctive in their 'attachment to a common body of symbols' (Rapport 1996). Specifically, these are symbols drawn from Anangu culture.

We will see that although rangers and community workers share similar concerns and living conditions: remote location, pressure on housing,

insecurity of work tenure, difficulty in securing partners; this does not result in their forming relationships to counteract these difficulties. Rather, rangers can be characterised by their attitudes of mutual suspicion and competition towards each other, and others in the locality. The rangers form a community in a symbolic sense: they form a distinctive identity in opposition to Yulara locals and tourists. The symbols to which they adhere are primarily drawn from Anangu culture, specifically Anangu intellectual property of the *Tjukurpa*, artefacts, music and the Pitjantjatjara language. This boundary manifests itself as rangers assert their roles as guardians of Anangu culture. However, the boundary also causes distress, as rangers try to negotiate the complexities and insecurities of friendships with Anangu. The distinctive ranger identity is also expressed in their body maintenance and adornment, regarding expensive or pristine clothes with disdain, and subverting the mainstream treatment of the body which removes hair from the legs and armpits of women, controls the length and styling of the hair of men and women, and limits the number of ear piercings or rings that should be worn. Through this turning away from the dictates of mainstream society, rangers proclaim themselves closer to nature, sensitive to ecology, uncluttered by the trivial aesthetic concerns of the wider society.

Yulara locals are united into a community, in both the traditional and symbolic senses, through sharing a location and in overcoming the problems associated with living in it. When in opposition to the powerful resort, a temporary, disparate group of people thrown together in a harsh landscape forms itself into a community, united in its opposition to the resort management and the expensive conditions, and working actively to subvert

them, e.g. through bartering, theft and scrounging. Similarly, Yulara locals combat the difficulties of living in the desert (loneliness, isolation, stress) through instituting community activities: fund raising, parties, sports and multiplex relationships. This contrasts with the rangers, who also share a remote location, yet have few communal activities and rather comprise a symbolic community. But Yulara locals also experience community in a symbolic sense. They are united against a number of perceived enemies: tourists, the National Park, and the resort management. There are various means by which Yulara locals subvert the power and wealth differential between themselves and these parties. Hence, tourists are portrayed as ignorant and helpless in the environment; dependent on the competent and knowledgeable Yulara locals to care for them.

The whitefellas in Mutitjulu are a 'community' in that they ascribe an identity to themselves based on access to, and knowledge of, Anangu culture, and perception of themselves as close to nature and sympathetic to indigenous ways. Within that community, specific individuals uphold their own personal orientation towards Anangu culture. This symbolic community manifests itself in opposition to other communities in the area: Anangu and Yulara locals. In respect to Anangu, it has been shown that there is a spatial distinction between the two groups, and that only certain aspects of Anangu culture are appropriated by rangers. Rangers generally also are not initiated into Anangu culture; and those who are find the demands of Aboriginal reciprocity and assistance overwhelming. In respect to Yulara locals, the symbolic boundary is manifested once again through appropriation of Aboriginal culture, and through asserting an identity as ecologically sensitive people. Although many

Yulara locals have much more extensive knowledge of the area than the rangers (regarding its flora, fauna, geology, history and Anangu culture), nevertheless rangers portray themselves as experts. Yulara locals deny this asserted expertise, but recognise the rangers as distinct by virtue of their adoption of certain modes of dress and adornment, and appropriation of Anangu culture: recognised by the derogatory phrase 'blacker than the blacks'.

Rangers and community workers

Rangers

The twenty white rangers living and working in the Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park are predominantly young (up to mid thirties), well-travelled and highly educated. They are also marginal people: they do not fit easily into mainstream Western society.[1] They describe themselves as marginal, relating a sense of detachment from mainstream values and aspirations and disdain for employment in this sector of society.[2] With their concerns for the environment and Aboriginal rights, they typically experience a variety of jobs within the

[1] The term 'marginal' was used by Dunning in regard to white workers in Indian and Eskimo communities in Canada. He describes them as marginal because they do not conform to normal Canadian ethical standards. They have a sense of superiority over indigenous people, stereotyping them as 'good' or 'bad' depending on willingness to submit to authority; use their positions within the community to assert power for themselves; demonstrate poor standards of work practice; and are generally culturally unsympathetic, even cruel in their attitudes towards indigenous people (Dunning 1959). This can be contrasted with the rangers, who are 'marginal' in eschewing conventional Australian life, but are highly sympathetic to, and protective of, Aboriginal culture. Weaver (1984) reports that rangers at Cobourg and Kakadu National Parks hold similar attitudes of support for, and interest in, Aboriginal culture.

[2] A case study can be given here of Meghan, who was 29 when I first met her. Leaving university with a degree in environmental science, she travelled around Asia for some time before working as a ranger in another Australian national park. She left the area after a broken love affair, but returned to Central Australia and worked as a tour guide in Yulara for a short time before taking a post as a ranger at Uluru. She suffered a series of disastrous love affairs, and sought a transfer to another park as a means to combat the ensuing depression and loneliness. When such a transfer had not transpired after several months, she took three months leave in order to travel, again in Asia. She scorns material possessions, and told me

Australian Parks Service or in Aboriginal communities before they come to Uluṟu. Though to the outsider Uluṟu may seem to be an idyllic location, and that to work in such a world famous national park should be a privilege; to rangers employed in other parks in Australia, Uluṟu is considered the worst park to work in, as it is underfunded, is prone to political infighting, and the practice of joint management brings its own problems with Aboriginal workmates. Few rangers in other national parks request transfer to Uluṟu, unless they themselves, being especially marginal people, are unable to succeed in other parks. For the rangers at Uluṟu, they realise that they are unable to cope in a mainstream situation, but are hopeful for transfers to other national parks. These are hard to obtain: work exchanges are difficult to arrange as few want to work at Uluṟu. Some rangers manage to obtain temporary contracts with other parks, with the hope that they will then be able to secure permanent employment elsewhere; but if further contracts are not forthcoming, they find themselves returning to Uluṟu.

Many of the rangers at Uluṟu are educated to degree level, often with specialities in biology, arid ecosystems or natural resource management. However, very few rangers find their expertise exploited by the Park Management; rather they are likely to undertake menial tasks like litter collection, mopping the toilets, crowd control at sunrise and sunset viewing areas, and manning the enquiries desk in the Cultural Centre. One former ranger I spoke to told me, "I have a degree in Politics and Human Resource Management. I was employed as curator of the art sites for both Uluṟu and

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that she would hate to be tied to a 9 to 5 job, as she likes to be able to leave on a whim in order to travel.

Kata Tjuṯa. I was supposed to explore the entire surface of the rock, documenting and photographing every single art site, then maintain a register of all of the art sites, and compile a photographic record of each site so erosion could be monitored. I actually managed to do that for one day a month. On one occasion even that was cancelled as I was asked to repair a fence. The rest of the time I was picking up beer cans from the side of the road, cleaning toilets and telling tourists not to walk on revegetation areas." It was suggested that professional cleaners be contracted to undertake the litter collection within the Park, leaving rangers free to use their individual talents to the benefit of the Park. The Park rejected the idea. However, few rangers complain that their education and experience are not being utilised effectively: those who do resent the menial jobs they are expected to do quickly leave the Park and seek more mainstream employment. The fact that these people are able to do so suggests that those rangers who remain are content to be under-employed, either through fear of the outside world where they do not fit in easily, or through a sense that they are working for the greater good of the Park. There is also a sense that this is typical of ranger work in other parks, that these menial jobs are the first rung on the promotions ladder, and that there is a certain prestige in the title 'ranger'.

The work pattern for rangers is ten days on, four off. Many express dissatisfaction with this arrangement as the four day break is not long enough to go away (bearing in mind the travelling time), yet there is little to do in the area for four days, especially when all of one's other friends and workmates are at work. Further, as rangers live in the same area, one is aware that others are working, so there is not a sense of a complete rest from work concerns.

Many also keep their radios switched on during days off, so they can monitor what is occurring within the Park. Exacerbating these work stresses, the majority of rangers are employed on temporary contracts, some of just a month's duration. For most people, their contracts are renewed, often several times, but it fosters a sense of insecurity, especially as housing is contingent on employment. Also, it is not possible to obtain a bank loan (to purchase a car, for example), if one is employed on a temporary contract. These working practices contribute to the psychological distress that all of the rangers exhibit manifested in depression and use of soft drugs.

The distress is worsened by the periodic rescues that rangers are involved in: some find themselves retrieving a corpse from the side of Uluṟu. I spoke to one ranger who had attended a rescue on Uluṟu just hours previously. He told me, "I was the first one to reach him (the victim). He was breathing but his heart had stopped. The man's wife was there but she wasn't too bothered, apparently he's had these attacks before. I haven't done any first aid for about eighteen months, but I just went into automatic pilot and administered CPR, just thinking of him as a car that had to be mended, not as a living human being. I just thought, 'Right, we've got to get your heart started' like he was an engine or something. Some other rangers got up to us, and we did CPR for thirty minutes, then a further twenty when the paramedics arrived, but he was dead. About an hour after I came down from the rock I just started crying. The other rangers say that's normal: Thomas said he kept breaking down for weeks after one rescue." After all fatalities, the rescue personnel are offered counselling. However, rather than fostering a sense of mutual co-operation as might be expected from people sharing an isolated,

insecure and distressing work situation, the rangers' attitudes towards each other are characterised by competition, jealousy and suspicion.

Community workers

The community workers number approximately ten people, and occupy predominantly professional positions such as liaison and executive officers, store keepers, school teacher, secretary and nurses within the Mutitjulu Community. Occasionally consultants in law, training or community development live within the community whilst involved in a specific project. Typically these people have worked previously in other Aboriginal communities, or in Aboriginal organisations and land councils. Remuneration for such jobs is good: a high salary; rent-free accommodation with free electricity and gas; a vehicle; air fares; and many also have computer equipment or telephones provided by the community. However, the work is pressured and stressful: many realise there is little they can do to improve living conditions for Aboriginal people. That the work is demanding is recognised by the fact that community employees are entitled to one week's 'stress leave' every three months. Workers are likely to become embroiled in intra-community personal politics, and so few remain in the community for longer than two years. Despite this, many of them leave to take up similar positions in different communities.

Housing

The rangers, together with white community workers, live within the Mutitjulu Community in the National Park. The Mutitjulu Community is

divided into two distinct areas, separated by a sand dune. Driving through the community, the first area comprises the mud brick houses, corrugated iron humpies, and brick structures inhabited by Anangu, and the portahomes and brick houses of the white community workers. The only whitefella to occupy a mud brick house is the Community Park Liaison Officer. This part of Mutitjulu is sarcastically referred to as 'Mutitjulu Heights' and also contains the store, petrol station, women's craft building, the clinic, church, school, adult education centre and the community offices. The area is dusty, copious amounts of litter blow over the road, and packs of odd-looking camp dogs worry anyone venturing out of their car who is unaware of the magic formula to silence them ("Shut up, *palya*!"). Beyond this part of Mutitjulu, and situated behind a sand dune is the area referred to as 'Rangerville'.[3] The rangers live here in brick houses of various sizes. All of the houses, in Rangerville and Mutitjulu Heights, have gardens around them, which would give a sense of space and privacy except the place is so quiet all of one's neighbours can hear what one is doing anyway. For some, the 'garden' is simply bare sand; others plant vegetable plots and water them carefully with installed irrigation systems. Some even have water features and statues in their gardens. Apart from vegetables, though, those who attempt to grow anything other than native species are roundly criticised: they are told such plants are classified as weeds in the context of a National Park and so should not be introduced.

Rangerville contains a tennis court and a children's playground, but no other amenities. There is no litter in this part of Mutitjulu, and the camp dogs

[3]The term is of such common currency that it is recognised by the police computer at the Motor Vehicle Registry in Yulara.

rarely venture into this area, though dingoes can be heard howling in the night. It can be seen that the rangers have distanced themselves from Anangu in two ways: by living beyond Anangu living space behind a sand dune (so Anangu cannot observe them); and by living at the end of the road so Anangu do not have to drive through the rangers' living space to reach their own houses. Therefore, Anangu have no reason to be in Rangerville, unless they have a specific purpose.[4] Rangers see the presence of Anangu as a warning to be wary: if they are seen in Rangerville it is assumed that they are there to request money, fuel, food, or a lift into Yulara.[5]

Yet despite this segregation, rangers' houses are typically decorated with dot paintings or Albert Namatjira prints; many have spears and spear throwers displayed on the walls; women's wooden bowls (*piti*) are displayed on shelves; and settees and chairs may be covered with fabric throws in dot patterns, or screen printed fabric from the Aboriginal community at Ernabella. Fridges are covered with stickers proclaiming Aboriginal rights and the need for reconciliation. Many rangers have collections of videos on Aboriginal lives and craftwork, and music collections always include Aboriginal rock bands. Though the National Park supplies each house with only a limited amount of

[4] Anangu rangers live in Mutitjulu Heights. When one Anangu ranger requested accommodation in Rangerville, he was firmly denied.

[5] Trigger's (1986) analysis of Aboriginal and whitefella domains in Doomadgee Aboriginal settlement in Queensland, provides some interesting parallels to the situation in Mutitjulu. The Doomadgee settlement is divided into two distinct living areas: the 'mission' where the white workers live; and the 'village' where the Aboriginal housing is located. All the facilities (hospital, store, school, village hall) are situated in the 'mission'; so Aborigines are only present in the white domain for specific purposes. In contrast to Mutitjulu, there is little Aboriginal visiting in the white area. In Mutitjulu, apart from the children, who run into the rangers houses, sometimes requesting to watch the television; adult Anangu mostly only visit in order to ask for favours. Trigger argues that the Aborigines themselves ensure the separation of the two domains, in order to minimise white administrative interference. See also Collman (1988) on Aboriginal fringe dwellers' manipulation of space to minimise white interference. As camps are inside the town of Alice Springs yet effectively outside the

furniture, most of the houses are well furnished: rangers may have acquired furnishings in previous jobs which they remove to their new situation. Almost all of them have a television set and stereo system. Despite the fact that many are employed on temporary contracts, there is a sense of permanency in the lifestyles they create: acquiring pets, planting gardens, purchasing furniture and artefacts.

Being situated in the desert, obviously the houses are also subject to vermin. The mud brick houses particularly are prone to mice, which easily chew through the bricks, and can run inside the walls and roof. The brick houses, too, may be infested with mice. Rangers are reluctant to kill them, so set live traps and release the mice into the desert. Vermin infestation is often perceived as evidence that one can live comfortably with nature. Apart from mice, houses may also be inhabited by geckos and lizards, which are problematic only because of the droppings they leave behind. Rather than evicting these house companions, rangers prefer to boast about the size of the lizards they give house room to, and there is a sense of one-up-manship over the variety, size and inconvenience these lizards cause. Once again, this can be seen as asserting an ability to live with the privations of the desert. Spiders and scorpions can also be found in the houses. On one occasion when I was staying in a ranger's house, I discovered a scorpion in my bed. My ranger friends were not concerned to ascertain whether or not it had stung me (in which case I would need medical treatment), but simply wanted to examine the intruder! I was considered cruel for insisting on the scorpion's eviction.

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administrative boundaries the Aboriginal people maintain both independence from, yet access to, white resources (p.100).

On a similar theme, rangers also share house space with dead native species. If out on ranger patrol they discover a dead bird, mammal, snake etc., typically rangers take the corpse home, label it with date, species and where they found it, and put it in the freezer with the explanation that it will have to be preserved so that it can be taken into the ranger station to be catalogued and examined by those in charge of fauna surveys. Sometimes species remain in house freezers for several months and may only be disposed of when the person who collected it moves out of the house. The presence of frozen native species does not preclude the use of freezers for the storage of food.

There is considerable pressure on housing for both white staff and Anangu. Single rangers may find they are forced to share a house with another ranger, not necessarily of their choosing. Housing is dependent on employment, and if a new member of staff is recruited and brings a partner with him, it is likely that the partner will also be employed in whatever vacancy exists either within the National Park or in the Community, whether or not they have the relevant experience or qualifications, so that extra housing does not have to be found for the person who fills the vacancy. One new community worker, accustomed to working in Aboriginal communities, told me, "My wife is just at home at the moment, but we'll find her a job in the community. There'll be no problem finding something for her to do." Sometimes vacancies are advertised, but the job description claims that no housing is available. It is not possible to secure housing elsewhere (housing in Yulara is available only to Yulara resort employees), so it is assumed that the job has been 'earmarked' for the partner of someone already working in the

Park or Community, but civil service regulations decree that vacancies must be advertised.

The road into Mutitjulu is tarmacked only for a few hundred yards, then it becomes a sandy track. As the sand is so unstable, after any rain the roads become deeply rutted; the wind blows the surface into deep corrugations which will rattle a car to pieces. Rangers whose houses are serviced by badly rutted and corrugated roads have a system by which they ensure their road is repaired. "What you do is invite Julian (the Park Manager) to dinner. Then he has to rattle his car all the way up and down the road, knackering the suspension and damaging the fuel lines, and he realises the road has to be regraded."

The Park supplies all housing in Mutitjulu with water, electricity and gas. These bring their own problems, and also highlight the way rangers perceive their role within the community. The water is recycled, but because it tastes revolting most rangers and community workers collect rain water in huge tanks at the side of the house, and have it piped into the house to a separate tap for drinking water. Unfortunately, many of the water tanks stagnated and the water was undrinkable. When new rangers arrived, no-one thought to warn them not to drink the rainwater, and so the arrival of each new ranger was characterised by a bout of gastro-enteritis. The electricity in the community is supplied by generators. Unfortunately the generators are unable to cope with the demands placed upon them, and they frequently break down or electricity has to be rationed to avoid an overload. This was the case during July 1997, the coldest month of that year, and the only time snow has been reported on Uluru. The generators were overloaded, and so it was decided to

switch off power to parts of Mutitjulu. Every evening, at five o'clock, the electricity supply to Rangerville was extinguished. Mutitjulu Heights kept its power supply throughout. The rangers explained that it was wrong to cut the power to Anangu: if only some people in the community could have power it was better that Anangu should have it rather than the rangers. Varying the areas that should be cut off was not considered. However, despite this virtuous attitude, rangers then took the opportunity to blame the situation on community workers who live in Mutitjulu Heights, on two counts. Firstly, that the people who ran the store were to blame for the entire problem because the store stocked electric heaters which all Anangu bought and installed in every part of their houses, thereby causing the generator to overload. No-one criticised Anangu for leaving lights on in each room, using many heaters and leaving heaters switched on even if they were not in the house: the problem was laid squarely at the feet of those who had supplied the heaters. Anangu do not pay for electricity or water: it is supplied by the Park as part of the leaseback agreement. Secondly, community workers also came in for criticism for actually living in the part of Mutitjulu not to have the power supply cut: they were seen to be having a comfortable life, unlike the rangers who would suffer any privation rather than inconvenience Anangu.

Ranger/ Community workers' attitudes towards Anangu

The rangers' attitude towards Anangu is the basis of their symbolic community. The problem of the electric heaters is only one example of their entire outlook on Anangu. This attitude can be shown to be ambiguous, sometimes contradictory. It underpins their construction of identity for

themselves (as marginalised people who do not fit easily into mainstream Western society) and yet also contributes to their psychological distress and suspicion of fellow rangers. Basically, as marginalised people, rangers appropriate selected aspects of Anangu culture to create a distinctive identity for themselves, separate from the mainstream Western society. The value that they place on Anangu culture causes them to neglect other relationships and fosters competition amongst colleagues.[6]

The major appropriation is of *Tjukurpa*, and it is appropriated in a distinctive way. Rather than ascribing to the ideology of *Tjukurpa*, rangers see themselves as guardians of it. Specifically, they regard themselves as the only people, other than Anangu, qualified to appreciate the *Tjukurpa* sensitively, and actively try to deny deep knowledge of the *Tjukurpa* to others.[7] The anthropologist Mountford, who worked at Uluru in the 1940s produced texts that detailed all of the *Tjukurpa* stories, at the level known only to initiated men. His books are no longer published, and access to his written fieldnotes is restricted, but it is possible to obtain old copies of his books, though they are now costly (approximately $600 for *Brown Men and Red Sand*). Most rangers denounce Mountford's writing as lies; although those who have worked with Anangu for some years say his work is accurate though no longer appropriate

[6]Riches' (1977) analysis of whites in Anurivik, Canada; is similar in that whites there were also anxious to learn about Inuit and to collect artefacts. He writes that knowledge about Inuit was assumed to arise proportionally through the length of time spent in the settlement. Anthropologists, who had extensive contact with Inuit, and so acquired knowledge more quickly, were criticised. Paradoxically, however, though Inuit were seen as exotic, and knowledge about Inuit culture desirable, those who interacted personally with Inuit were criticised for 'going native'. In contrast, the white rangers actively sought Anangu friends. Once again, knowledge of an indigenous culture was a source of prestige.

[7]Rangers are suspicious of those whom they perceive may have deeper knowledge of the *Tjukurpa* than they do. Anthropologists are good candidates for this suspicion. It is similar to the experience of Hazel Tucker (pers. comm.) working with tourists and troglodytes in

for mass consumption. Interestingly, even though they deny the veracity of Mountford's work, most of the rangers have read his work, and a significant number possess copies. One ranger who was responsible for the protection of the art sites was encouraged to visit the Mountford collection held in the South Australia State Library in Adelaide, where he could compare contemporary photographs of art sites with those taken by Mountford, and so be able to judge the rate of erosion the paintings have suffered. When this ranger left the Park service and continued to use the Mountford collection for his own, and his wife's, interest, he was informed by the same Park ranger who had encouraged his use of the collection that he no longer had any right to see the materials. So it can be seen that according to rangers, ability to protect and understand the *Tjukurpa* is contingent on actually being employed as a ranger and not on personal qualities.

It is also interesting that rangers vehemently deny their own belief in the *Tjukurpa*, while yet strenuously promoting it as if it were their own belief system. This overemphasis on the *Tjukurpa* as the only explanation for features in the Park led, predictably, to nonsensical situations.[8] The Park Botanist was informed by senior colleagues that he was no longer allowed to conduct his free botanical tours for tourists because the names he gave for the species were based on Linnaean taxonomy, and he did not offer any *Tjukurpa* on the tour. He was told he would have to teach tourists the Pitjantjatjara

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Turkey: as an anthropologist, tourists were resentful that her experiences might be more 'authentic' than theirs.

[8]I have already discussed the eschewal of geological explanations for Uluṟu, as they contradict the *Tjukurpa*.

names for species, and address the issue of *Tjukurpa* if he wished to continue his tours.[9]

The issue of Pitjantjatjara terms was another distinctive appropriation of Anangu culture. On the ranger-led Mala walk, some rangers will only offer tourists the Pitjantjatjara terms for plant and animal species, so the tourists struggle as they are bombarded with unfamiliar, peculiar sounding words. This overemphasis on use of Pitjantjatjara led to absurdities. When the Park was designing new signs to warn tourists not to enter or photograph sacred sites, the rangers asserted that the signs must be written in Pitjantjatjara first, and then translated into other languages, despite the fact that 90% of Anangu are illiterate, and that anyway they know which are sacred sites and the correct behaviour. As a consequence, when tourists approach these signs, they see the Pitjantjatjara at the top of the sign, and assume the whole sign is in Pitjantjatjara, and so ignore it. Facility in Pitjantjatjara is an assertion of prestige for many rangers: commonly their language is sprinkled with Pitjantjatjara terms.[10] This knowledge is also used to exclude others: when I arrived in the area I was talking to some rangers in their house when Rupert

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[9]The exception to this overemphasis on *Tjukurpa* on the part of the rangers is the ranger who mans the Park entry station, selling tickets to tourists and generally answering questions and offering advice. This elderly man talks disparagingly of 'the Tukurp' and asserts that it is ridiculous to have all the road signs directing tourists to Uluru and Kata Tjuta instead of Ayers Rock and the Olgas. He is of the opinion, "If these Aborigines want to live in this country they should learn to speak English."

[10]cf. Trigger (1986) where white workers in Doomadgee, Queensland, rarely learned any Aboriginal words, or acquired any knowledge of Aboriginal etiquette. This ignorance led to distress for Aborigines, as when an Aboriginal person died, the whites continued to use that person's name, even announcing it at his funeral. By contrast, in Mutitjulu, rangers were careful to avoid using the names of deceased Anangu: some rangers had the same first name as someone deceased and were called by Anangu and whitefellas alike by the term *kunmanara*, which denotes a name which is forbidden to be spoken. (Anangu may also not say words which sound like the name of a deceased person). One ranger told me that this emphasis on culturally appropriate behaviour sometimes led to confusion, as the rangers refused to say the name of a person who had recently died, even to alert white colleagues.

called by to visit me. Jealous that I had already made some Anangu friends, the rangers proceeded with the conversation, but in Pitjantjatjara. Fortunately for me, Rupert worked out what was occurring, and obligingly translated the conversation into English for me, thereby proving his own proficiency in English. Even rangers who speak relatively little Pitjantjatjara will appropriate terms for naming their pets: *malpa* (friend), *kali* (boomerang) and *kuru maru* (black-eye i.e. Patch). Thus, the rangers have appropriated aspects of Anangu intellectual property (*Tjukurpa* and language) to assert a distinctive identity for themselves, to exclude others, and to promote their own superiority through facility in these areas.

Regarding relationships with Anangu themselves, the situation is ambiguous and contradictory. Many rangers aspire to Anangu friends, while yet recognising the difficulty these relationships bring. Michael, a white ranger, told me, "The rangers acquire kudos through the number of Anangu friends they have, but that means that they desert their white friends in favour of Anangu." Other rangers have expressed frustration with the friendships they have formed. Meghan, a white ranger, told me, "You are never sure whether they (Anangu) see it as a friendship, or if you're (white rangers) just being used. The cultural differences are just too great. You might think that you're friends, but that has other implications that you might not be willing to become involved in, like lending money, giving them food and lifts and petrol. But if you don't do these things, they abuse you. It's too difficult, so I've decided not to try any more." The Park Manager, who had lived with Anangu

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Thus colleagues were aware that someone had died, but they did not know who, as their workmates refused to say the name.

for several years and been initiated, said, "Because I've been through the Law, I've got kinship links to lots of people, and that means I have to look after them. If I did everything that was expected of me, I'd never have any money. There's always someone coming to my office and asking for money, so I never have money on me: that way I can show them my empty wallet and say honestly I can't give them anything, yet not cause offence. Willis (the Community Liaison Officer, who was also initiated) has probably given them tens of thousands of dollars over the years: he's so generous."[11]

Many rangers eschew friendships with fellow white workers in order to pursue friendships with Anangu, although these friendships are not always apparent.[12] At barbecues at the ranger station, everyone is asked to bring drink and meat to cook. The rangers jealously guard the food they have brought, sharing it with no-one, while Anangu stand in a circle round the barbecue area watching the rangers eating. No-one offers to share with Anangu. However, when Julian, the Park Manager left, his leaving party was a very different affair. Once again there was a barbecue, but Julian provided all of the meat, and a quantity of alcohol. He allowed three cans of beer per person, to ensure that there would be no problems of drunkenness in Mutitjulu. However, many piranpa decided not to consume their share of the beer in favour of soft drinks, deliberately so that Anangu could have more to drink. The sentiment seemed to be that living in a dry community, and unable to buy alcohol in Yulara, it

[11]See Collman (1988) on the issue of secrecy and whites, who may be entrusted with some knowledge of secret rituals and rites, but in return are expected to engage in Aboriginal mores of reciprocity and assistance.

[12]One ranger was fond of asserting how he was good friends with several of the senior Anangu men. I suspect they realised how he was using them to ascribe importance to himself, as one time when he was discussing how much they liked him they were in fact pulling faces at him behind his back and grinning complicitly.

was right for Anangu to be able to have a binge once in a while, and the piranpa facilitated this. Though some Anangu became very drunk, there was no violence.

Although rangers wish to acquire Anangu friends, their attitude towards them as workmates is not so benign. Anangu employment in the Park is a contentious matter. Anangu spokespeople constantly complain that insufficient numbers of Anangu are employed in the Park. Park management agree, but though they urge Anangu to take up employment, offer traineeships for Anangu rangers, and are accommodating to Anangu cultural demands and difficulties, typically Anangu do not apply for positions. This creates antagonism, as the Park asserts it has done everything in its power to encourage Anangu to work for them, but still they are criticised for not employing sufficient numbers of Anangu. When Anangu are employed, typically they only work for a short time before leaving either through loss of interest, or irreconcilable conflict. Many Anangu employed as trainee rangers fail repeatedly to turn up for work; may miss work through drunkenness; or come into conflict with their piranpa workmates. One white ranger had been forced to discipline an Anangu workmate under his direction for failing to return to work after his lunch break, and generally unsatisfactory work performance. The person retaliated by calling the ranger a racist.

As discussed in the previous chapter with regard to Aboriginal understandings of tourism, Bird-David (1992) argues that hunter-gatherer people often undertake 'other' subsistence activities, including agriculture, pastoralism and wage labour. However, such activities are conducted within a distinctive hunter-gatherer attitude towards the environment: intimate

knowledge of the environment and confidence that it will always yield resources, and the flexibility to use whatever resources are available. This pertains for hunting and gathering activities as much as for agriculture or wage work: such opportunities are seen as yielded by the environment. This perspective of the environment influences the way hunter-gatherers participate in other subsistence pursuits, and wage labour is characterised by casual, variable employment as a supplement to hunting and gathering. Wages are spent immediately on subsistence foods, and there is no saving or reinvestment of either wages or the food purchased with wages. It can be argued that Anangu attitudes towards the National Park are similar to the model proposed by Bird-David: the Park (at Uluru or other national parks) is seen as a resource to provide services to Anangu, in the form of electricity, housing, vehicles and availability of jobs; and Anangu are free to take up (or ignore) such resources as they wish, or as other opportunities arise.

Periodically general dissatisfaction with Anangu attitudes surfaces. During 1997, a situation arose in the Cultural Centre whereby white staff were finding it impossible to work amicably with an Anangu colleague who was repeatedly abusive and aggressive towards them, asserting that they had no right to work there as they were whites. The problem quickly escalated into a debate about racism, and Anangu accused the Park of failing to employ Anangu, and being unsympathetic to their work problems such as the unfamiliarity with time-keeping, punctuality and sick leave. At meetings to discuss the problem of the Cultural Centre employee, tensions were raised by the woman's relatives threatening other workers with physical violence if she were sacked. Finally, the white workers went on strike, refusing to return until

the woman was removed. This was extremely damaging to the Park, as the woman gave several media interviews, and called into question the notion of joint management. Piranpa reactions to the Cultural Centre strike were distinctive: rangers were angry that the situation had gone so far, and expressed dissatisfaction with Anangu for their blinkered approach; white community workers were saddened by the situation and said that Anangu had lost confidence in 'working together'. The strike was interesting in that it showed that at times of stress, lines of opposition were drawn along ethnic lines, for both Anangu and piranpa.

Piranpa (rangers and community workers) themselves criticised Anangu when the boarding school was opened in Yulara. Some Anangu women were asked to perform an *inma* (dance) at the school's opening ceremony. They refused as they were not going to be paid for this. One woman told me, "I'm disgusted with them. Until now they have had to send their children to Alice Springs for school, now they've got a secondary school on the doorstep, everything provided for them, yet they won't even do an *inma* if they don't get paid. And many of them only went to the opening ceremony because there was a free barbecue. I saw them going in saying, 'Kuka, kuka!' (meat, meat). It's so disheartening." Those listening agreed with her sentiments.

Noticeably the community workers do not display the distinctive attitudes towards Anangu culture held by the rangers. Community workers rarely mention *Tjukurpa*, speak Pitjantjatjara only to Anangu and not each other, and do not actively seek Anangu friends. However, amongst both rangers and community workers, there is a difference in attitude towards

Anangu depending on whether people have lived and worked with Anangu for a number of years. As a general rule, the longer people have lived and worked with Anangu, the more comfortable they are in expressing criticism of them. Those who are not in regular contact with Anangu are much more precious in their attitudes and never criticise Anangu, particularly in regard to hygiene.

Rangers who have lived amongst Anangu for several years do see themselves as guardians of the *Tjukurpa*, speak to each other in Pitjantjatjara and seek Anangu friends; but they are likely also to express frustration with Anangu. Apart from the employment problems already detailed, they may discuss Anangu health problems and hygiene, or criticise them for sexual promiscuity. One time when I went to house-sit for Julian, he asked me if I could clean the house while I was there, as, "The house is dirty: I've had a load of Anangu staying here and the place is filthy." He also told me how disgusted he was with the Anangu habit of spitting in the car, and how he is wary of catching scabies from them. Others have criticised Anangu who have access to ranger vehicles for keeping their vehicles in a dirty condition, and for repeatedly denting and scratching them.[13] I have also been told how rangers were instructed to use the fire-hoses to clean Anangu houses, as the walls were covered with snot. Some rangers complained that they could always tell when Anangu children had been in their houses as the walls were encrusted with mucus. Rangers who have limited experience of Anangu generally do not discuss these matters, and denounce those who do offer such

[13]The Park mechanic was openly critical of the way Anangu failed to maintain Park vehicles. When he heard that the park was to donate some vehicles to Anangu, he systematically removed all extra features and new parts from the vehicles, and fitted them with old parts, as he rationalised that if Anangu owned them, they would not be running for long. He is an

criticisms of Anangu. For them, the only aspects of Anangu culture suitable for discussion (and appropriation) are intellectual: *Tjukurpa*, artefacts and language.[14]

It is useful to draw on Kristeva's notions of the abject when analysing these different responses to Anangu hygiene. Kristeva argues that the sensations of repugnance/ abjection occur when the boundaries of the body are traversed, and man strays towards the animal (Kristeva 1982: 2;12). These ideas can be compared with Bakhtin's notions of the grotesque. His grotesque corresponds to Kristeva's abject, but is viewed more positively (Vice 1997: 164). I hypothesise that rangers who have little to do with Anangu experience the abject when in contact with them, but as the community adheres to positive ascriptions for Aboriginal culture, the ranger concerned is unwilling to voice his/her abjection. However, with familiarity, the abject becomes grotesque: just 'other', but not repulsive. The abject is therefore a subjective category.

Thus, piranpa attitudes towards Anangu can be seen to be ambivalent: seeking Anangu as friends yet insecure about the reciprocity and implications of those friendships; wanting Anangu to be employed within the Park yet frustrated by them as workmates; seeing themselves as guardians of Anangu culture, yet not subscribing to it themselves; defending Anangu from criticism yet revolted by their living standards. The display of this ambivalence varies according the level of experience people have of Anangu, and whether they

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interesting exception to the general rule that the less experience rangers have of Anangu, the less critical they are.

[14]cf. Trigger (1986) where white workers in Doomadgee, Queensland often criticised Aboriginal housing as dirty and verminous.

are rangers or community workers.[15] However, one thing they are all united in is their attitude towards tourists and the Yulara resort.

Attitudes towards Tourists and Yulara

To those living and working within the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park, both white rangers and community workers, tourists and the tourism industry are viewed as the enemy. Senior Park rangers supported the Yulara resort encouraging tourists to remain in the resort and simply view Uluṟu from their hotel windows, as, "It helps us in the Park as we don't like tourists." The Aṉangu term for tourists, *minga* (small black ants), is widely used by Park staff when referring to tourists. When used by Aṉangu, it is purely descriptive, and refers to the fact that in silhouette tourists streaming up the side of Uluṟu look like tiny ants. However, when used by rangers, the term is derogatory. Tourists are persistently referred to as *minga*, even to the extent of using the term on survey forms where rangers are asked to count numbers of '*minga*' arriving at various peak areas of the Park.

The co-dependence of the resort and Park on each other is rarely recognised. Resort management often fail to realise that without the lure of the Park there would be no need for the resort; and the Park does not acknowledge the role the resort plays in catering for the visitors. This has often resulted in

[15]See also Collman, writing about Aboriginal fringe camps in Alice Springs, where Aborigines ensure minimal interference from white government agencies, whilst yet having access to social security payments and occasional employment on cattle stations. The symbolic boundary between whites and Aborigines is reinforced through the assertion of secret rites and sacred sites. Whites who cross the boundary are drawn into this secrecy, being simultaneously part of, yet separate from, the Aborigines. In return for this partial integration, whites must conform to Aboriginal norms of reciprocity and assistance (Collman 1988: 30ff). It can be seen that this pertains amongst rangers and Aṉangu at Muṯitjulu, where effectively rangers trade access to resources in return for knowledge of Aṉangu. This may also explain their insistence on protecting the *Tjukurpa* from outsiders.

mutual antagonism, though I was assured that the relationship between the resort and the Park was better than previously. During 1997, the resort decided to build a swimming pool in Mutitjulu, and it provided land, buildings and services for the boarding school. The school was funded in conjunction with the Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation, which has both whitefella and Anangu directors. Some members of Mutitjulu Community expressed disapproval that the school was being funded by the Yulara resort and a commercial operation, and so avoided the opening ceremony. Notably, the chairperson of the Board of Management was of this view. The new Community Liaison Officer found himself in a quandary about the new school: disapproving of the source of the funding, yet recognising the benefits to the community. He solved this dilemma by attending the ceremony yet refusing to leave his car and enter the school grounds.

In September 1997 the Park decreed that the Yulara resort was not a tour operator and so could not buy Park entry tickets at a reduced price for retail to tourists. The manager of Anangu Tours rang the Community Liaison Officer to complain, and was informed that the resort had done nothing for Anangu, forgetting the school and the swimming pool. The attitude that the resort does not benefit Mutitjulu Community is commonplace and partly true: the community is under-resourced and Anangu are poor, in contrast to the conspicuous wealth of the tourists, and the high prices for hotel rooms. However, this attitude thwarts even well-intentioned efforts to bridge the gap between the two communities. The college in Yulara wanted to offer Pitjantjatjara courses to Yulara locals, and at least twenty people signed up for them. The course was delayed by a year as white community workers refused

to ask Anangu if they would be prepared to undertake paid work as language teachers. The reason given was once again that the resort had done nothing for Anangu, so why should they do anything for the resort. Also, rangers and white community workers perceive Yulara locals as ignorant, racist and likely to offend Anangu.[16] The lessons only commenced because the teacher made private agreements with individual Anangu, and took the decision regarding the lessons away from the Community council and advisors.

Community

It is my contention that the attitudes displayed by individual white rangers and community workers towards each other (jealousy, suspicion, exclusion in favour of Anangu) and towards the Yulara resort have resulted in a particular configuration of 'community' which is less to do with sharing the privations of life in the desert, and more to do with ascribing a distinctive identity for a marginalised, psychologically distressed population. They form a community in a symbolic sense through their adherence to Anangu culture and perception of themselves as sympathetic to Aboriginal concerns.

However, it can be seen that amongst the white workers in Mutitjulu there are few objective community activities. There is little socialising between rangers and white community workers: community personnel are never invited to barbecues and leaving parties at the ranger station. In fact,

[16]Anangu themselves can thwart piranpa attempts to protect them from the perceived enemy. At the Tour Operators' Workshop in March 1997, the white teachers tried to conceal information about Anangu culture from the participants. They were also keen that all participants should use the correct Pitjantjatjara terms for features on Uluru. However, whilst explaining the Mala story, Reggie Uluru referred to 'the brain', instead of *Mala wati*, much to the disapproval of the white teachers. Further, noticing that the course participants were enthralled by his telling of the Kuniya story, he suddenly announced, "I'll show you how the

during the two years that I was there, there was only one occasion where it could be said that rangers, white community workers and Anangu came together as a community. This was the occasion of a lost three year old child, who simply wandered away from his house and became lost in the desert. All members of the community searched in teams to locate the child, many taking dogs with them to scent him. Some used the rescue helicopter to conduct a search from the air. Anangu trackers followed the child. He was found, safe and well, just a few hours after he went missing. The next day many Anangu and community workers were tired, as they had been tracking the child through the night; but there was a sense of satisfaction, of a common cause that had united the community. I spoke to one of the trackers who told me, "We could follow his tracks through the sand, and we knew he was all right. We could tell this is where he stopped and played; here he got frightened; this is where he started to cry; this is where he got tired." One of the community workers told me, "This is a great result for the community. Mostly it's just bad things that happen; but yesterday, that was black and white working together, and the kid was safe. It wasn't because it was a white kid that went missing, we all would have done the same if it was an Anangu kid. I'm going to call the radio station: this is a good result."

Mostly, though, there are few community activities except for barbecues and drinking sessions at the ranger station. The ranger station is situated within the National Park, but is not within the community. Strictly, Mutitjulu Community is 'dry', i.e. no alcohol is allowed into the community,

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Liru war dance went," then picked up a spear, retreated into the bush, and emerged trilling loudly and moving the spear sharply in front of his body as he enacted the Liru war dance.

so rangers and community workers wishing to drink should either go to Yulara, necessitating a journey of 13 kms while drunk; or go without. In practice, they do neither, and there are various practices whereby the alcohol prohibition is circumvented. Many rangers keep a store of alcohol hidden in their houses, and they are careful when this alcohol is retrieved. They often squat beside the kitchen cupboards to open a bottle so their actions cannot be seen accidentally through the windows. A favourite location for drinking out of sight is a sand-dune which used to be the old sunrise viewing area when the tourist accommodation was within Mutitjulu. Many rangers use this sand-dune for camping-outs, and for drinking parties. Alcohol may be legally consumed at the ranger station, as it is not part of the community, and it is common for rangers to purchase beer in Yulara to keep on ice at the ranger station so they can have a drink after work. Occasionally large quantities of alcohol are consumed at the ranger station, but as it is illegal to drive a commonwealth vehicle (i.e. a ranger car) with any alcohol in the blood, there is an unofficial warning system which operates to alert others that someone is driving home drunk, and other road users should beware. If anyone is very drunk, they drive from the ranger station to Rangerville along a fire-trail known as the 'backtrack' as it avoids using the sealed road through the Park and around Uluru. Other drivers in the community see the dust along the backtrack and are warned that the driver of the vehicle is likely to be drunk.

Apart from the occasional barbecue and the drinking sessions at the ranger station, there are no other community events for rangers. However, they do not then turn to Yulara for entertainment. There are numerous events for locals in Yulara, but rangers attend very few of them. There is a Residents'

Club in Yulara providing cheap food and drink, a disco, darts, snooker and video games. Although Anangu were not allowed to drink in the Residents' Club, white inhabitants of Mutitjulu could be served, but even so, very few took advantage of this facility.[17] Yulara also has two formal black tie balls each year for locals; and once again very few rangers attended them. No-one attended any of the numerous fund raising activities for charity, such as quiz nights, pram battle, or crop a cop. Some rangers did form a volleyball team, using the sports hall in Yulara, and competing against other local teams; but social events in either Mutitjulu or Yulara were rare. Reasons for eschewing Yulara events predictably were that the resort is seen as the enemy, and rangers do not perceive themselves as having much in common with Yulara workers, especially as rangers portray themselves as sensitive guardians of Aboriginal culture, and resort workers are ignorant exploiters of Anangu. This attitude has repercussions when it comes to finding sexual partners in the area.

Sex

There are a number of factors that impinge on rangers' and community workers' attempts to secure romantic or sexual partners: small population; proximity of living and working; eschewal of Yulara and Yulara employees.[18] The overall population is small, and a number of rangers already have permanent partners; therefore the available pool from which to draw a

[17] It was the decision of the Mutitjulu Community council that outlets in Yulara should not serve alcohol to Anangu as drunkenness results in domestic violence and crime in the community. Technically, white community inhabitants were also not supposed to purchase off-sales of alcohol, though this was rarely enforced. Recently, however, the Residents' Club has decreed that no members of Mutitjulu, white or Anangu, will be served either with bar purchases or off-sales.

potential partner is extremely small. Further, many of the rangers are looking for transfers to other national parks, so if a relationship does begin, it is likely to be short lived. However, it could be argued that the movement of people into and out of Rangerville provides a larger pool of available partners. In practice this does not occur, as there is an unofficial 'waiting list'. Amongst female rangers there was a definite sense of whoever had been partnerless for longest should be allowed to have the first pick of any new male rangers. Any woman who moved into the area and secured a boyfriend quickly was informed categorically that it was not her turn! Others who had been there longer expected that they should be offered the new male first: this attitude was current even where the female rangers were not attracted to the new arrival: it was the principle that was at stake. Interestingly, this attitude did not seem to hold amongst the male rangers: though they often expressed frustration at being without a partner, and interest in any new female arrival, they never articulated it being their 'turn' for a partner.

Rangers find relationships problematic. Casual sexual encounters do not occur, probably because the parties are aware that they will have to work together in the future. Further, many rangers find themselves working with those they have met in previous work contexts, and there is considerable gossip about previous romances, so to avoid embarrassment, many avoid casual sex with workmates. Those who do form romantic relationships are likely to find the natural course of the relationship is hurried through external pressures. Knowing that one partner is to leave soon can make people commit

[18]In this section I am discussing heterosexual relationships, as at the time I was working there was only one gay ranger, who did not stay long in the area. There was a gay couple amongst the community workers, who faced some hostility.

to the relationship much earlier in its course than would be experienced in other situations. The limited provision of housing also results in Park Management encouraging people to live together, thereby freeing up another house.

Relationships with Yulara employees are unlikely as rangers rarely venture into Yulara, and such relationships are frowned upon as the resort is seen as the enemy. Rangers rarely form relationships with Anangu. There was only one man who had an Anangu wife.[19] Many Anangu women aspire to a white boyfriend, and flirt openly with all white men. White women are often irritated by this, especially as they may also be subjected to spiteful remarks from Anangu women, jealous because they want a white man for a partner.[20] One white woman told me that she had invited a male Anangu friend to a ball at Yulara, but he refused to go as he was 'ashamed' of his shabby clothing when everyone else was dressed up.

Thus, sexual relationships of either a casual or long-term nature are difficult to obtain for rangers, and combined with the lack of community activities, insecurities about work, and the isolation of the area, produces extreme psychological distress amongst rangers.

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[19]Yulara locals expressed an opinion that this ranger had only married this woman in order to gain access to her share of the money from the Park's leaseback arrangement.

[20]Pink (1998) discusses the situation in Canchungo, Guinea Bissau; where European development workers are seen by locals as desirable partners, and fathers for their children, as they will have access to European resources and wealth. Those who have a white man's baby are regarded as role models for younger girls. In Mutitjulu, it was not stated that white male partners were desirable because they would bring greater advantages to their children. See also Trigger (1986) on Doomadgee, Queensland, where there were no marriages between Aborigines and white workers; and Aborigines were surprised to hear of marriages between Aboriginal men and white women; though it was less uncommon for relationships to occur between white men and Aboriginal women.

Body Maintenance

The way in which the white rangers and community workers maintain their bodies also contributes to their sense of themselves as a symbolic community. Anthropologist have long noted how the body and its adornment are visible, highly manipulable markers of social status (for example see Blacking 1977). Synott writes that hair is 'one of our most powerful symbols of individual and group identity' as it is both public and personal. He theorises that opposite sexes have opposite hair, that head and body hair are opposite, and that opposite ideologies have opposite hair. Typically men minimise their head and facial hair, and keep their body hair; whereas women maximise their head hair, adapt their facial hair, and remove their body hair. Oppositions to conventional gender roles, or to conventional society, are often expressed through manipulation of the hair (Synott 1993: 103-127). Regarding the rangers, it can be seen that both the men and women treat their hair similarly, in contrast to the convention that male and female hair is opposed: they adopt long head hair with minimal styling, and do not remove hair from their faces and bodies.

Rangers' bodies are distinctive in the way they are adorned. Many of the men sport unruly beards or scruffy stubble, long hair, tattoos and earrings. The women typically have many earrings, creeping up their ears; toe rings; many finger rings; long unstyled hair; unshaped eyebrows; unshaved armpits and legs; and they rarely wear makeup. Apart from their green ranger uniforms, away from work both women and men wear tie dyed T-shirts or generally shabby clothing. The women also favour long flowing tie dyed

dresses with no bra or tights.[21] Though they may on occasions iron their uniforms, they rarely iron their everyday clothing. Both women and men are fastidious about applying sunscreen, and actively encourage tourists to do likewise to prevent melanoma. They are also careful to wear protective headgear and sunglasses, often of the wrap-around variety.

In an attempt to counteract the mental distress experienced by rangers, soft drug taking in Mutitjulu is endemic. Certain rangers are known to smoke considerable quantities of cannabis, but of the remainder, the majority also indulge on occasions. Some smoke cannabis the whole time they are away from work, and drug induced work incapacity is common amongst some rangers. They are open about the drug taking, and senior Park management recognise the role drugs play in assisting staff to cope with the privations of life. Thus, those who are normally efficient and reliable workers are excused when on occasions, under great pressure, they are unable to work due to overuse of cannabis.[22]

Though the rangers assert an identity for themselves as living close to nature, when it comes to the maintenance of the body, this only goes so far. In regard to the adornment of the body, rangers are distinctive with their uncontrolled hair, shabby clothing and, paradoxically, much jewellery. However, in regard to the protection of the body and hygiene, they espouse

[21] This distinctive style of clothing and adornment is found amongst rangers and community workers, and is also prevalent amongst white workers in other Aboriginal communities.
[22]Both Riches (1977) and Koster (1977) discuss white workers in the Arctic becoming 'bushed': feeling claustrophobic in the situation and just having to leave, either for an extended holiday, or permanently. Rangers (and long term Yulara locals) display similar reactions to being in a remote, stressful situation for extended periods. For rangers not wanting to leave the public service, this may be solved by arranging a work exchange for a few months, or by taking an extended holiday. Park Management may also agree to rangers taking a year's leave without pay, as they are reluctant to lose staff, and recognise when they

preventative medicine such as skin care, inoculations, safe sex, regular bathing, and the use of handkerchiefs.

Yulara locals

In the next section I will examine the community formed by the workers in the tourist resort of Yulara. Yulara occupies 104 square kilometres of land along the Uluṟu - Kata Tjuṯa National Park's northern boundary. This parcel of land was once Aboriginal owned, part of the Katiti Land Trust, but when numbers of tourists increased dramatically during the 1970s and it was decided to build a resort to cater for tourists outwith the National Park, the traditional Aboriginal owners of Katiti agreed to sign over a parcel of their land for the resort. The airport is also situated on the resort land. The resort was built by the Northern Territory government, and opened in 1984. Selling 40% of its shares in the early 1990s, until 1997 the Northern Territory owned 60% of the shares in the resort, the remainder being held by commercial businesses. At the end of 1997, the Northern Territory government sold its holding in the resort to the construction company Lend Lease. At the same time the township of Yulara was downgraded to resort status, by Act of Parliament. There was considerable opposition to this from Yulara residents, who argued that the 1000 or so locals constituted a community, and it was not simply a resort.

Yulara comprises a ring-road, around which the hotels, shopping square and the campground are situated. Set behind the tourist accommodation are the staff quarters and facilities. Beyond the central accommodation areas and shops there is an observatory and camel farm; and towards the airport are

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are suffering extreme stress. For Yulara locals, long stay residents may once again take a long

the laundry, water and electricity plants, bus depots and a caravan park where some Yulara residents live. The resort buildings and the airport occupy only a portion of the total 104 square kilometres allotted to Yulara, leaving ample land for further building and expansion. However, once beyond the current buildings one finds oneself in the desert. Dingoes are often seen within the resort, and housing is shared with spiders, cockroaches, centipedes and mice. The resort was designed to follow the natural contours of the sand dunes, and all the buildings are low rise: none is higher than the top of the sand-dunes. The resort gardens are landscaped with native species.

Housing and facilities

All accommodation within Yulara resort is owned by the resort. Those living at the caravan park pay ground rent to the resort, and share a shower and laundry block. Until December 1997 the housing stock was technically owned by the Northern Territory Housing Commission, but it was administered by the resort, and rents exceeded typical Housing Commission rates.[23] However, when Lend Lease bought the resort it also purchased the housing stock. Although there were fears that this would result in a rent increase, this did not occur, and more houses were built.

The housing provision varies from bedsits to five-bedroomed houses, but access to these properties is based not on willingness to pay, but on length of employment in Yulara.[24] Only those employed in the resort are entitled to

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holiday. If the anomie continues, leaving the area is the only solution.

[23]A bedsit in Yulara costs $100 a week, a one-bedroomed house is $130 a week.

[24]It should be noted that this is continuous employment in Yulara. If staff leave the resort, even for just a few months, then return, they are once again relegated to the bedsit accommodation.

accommodation. However, employment is no guarantee of housing, even bedsit accommodation, as there is always a housing shortage due to the increasing numbers of staff needed to cater for burgeoning numbers of tourists, but housing stocks have not been developed accordingly. New arrivals in Yulara are accommodated in the 'flatettes': one room bedsits encompassing bedroom and kitchen, and sharing a bathroom with twelve others. After a few months, it may be possible to graduate to a 'share': own bedroom and living room but sharing the kitchen and bathroom with one other person. Unfortunately, as the housing stock is so pressurised, many people find themselves in what is termed a 'share-share' situation, whereby two people occupy the bedroom and living area, sharing the kitchen and bathroom possibly with another two people. After working for a year, approximately, staff are entitled to a 'flat': one bedroomed and with its own facilities. Only managers and those who have worked in Yulara for several years are entitled to a house. Houses are the only accommodation with a garden. Houses with more than one bedroom are allotted predominantly to resort senior managers, or those with several children. Having a family does not ensure larger, more suitable accommodation, though, and some families have been told that they are not entitled to larger housing until they have worked longer in the resort or attain senior management level. Childless couples may find themselves sharing a bedsit in the early months of their employment. Thus, it is difficult for families to move into Yulara, and the staff are predominantly single people.

Those who have a garden area often develop it, adding water features, hanging baskets, a small barbecue area and outdoor seating. The gardens are

often covered with shade cloth, which protects the plants from the harsh light, makes the area cooler and shadier for seating, and provides privacy so the garden can be used as an outdoor room. Dinner parties in the garden are frequent in Yulara. Some sow vegetable patches with extensive irrigation systems, and grow tomatoes, herbs, peppers and aubergines. There is an annual garden competition in Yulara, demonstrating the pride and effort some people invest in their gardens.

There are a number of aspects of life in Yulara which have resulted in Yulara locals enjoying multiplex relationships which enable them either to subvert the impinging situation, or to adapt to it.[25] These aspects are: location of staff accommodation; cost of housing and services; length of stay for locals; cost and accessibility of essential household items. For Yulara locals, who in mainstream Australian society would normally engage in single-stranded relationships, in Yulara they are thrown together in numerous situations and so necessarily form multiplex relationships with each other: as workmates, friends, neighbours, members of the same sports team etc.

The staff accommodation is set apart from the tourist hotels; so effectively that many tourists cannot imagine where the staff live. The housing areas are equipped with communal laundries, barbecue areas and swimming pools. There are also a number of tennis courts and children's play areas, and staff are confident that anyone encountered in these areas is a fellow worker and not a tourist. Consequently, there is a tendency to strike up

[25] The term 'multiplex relationships' was coined by Gluckman in his comparison of African and Western legal systems. He uses the term to refer to 'relationships which serve many interests': two people are linked through numerous social ties: economic, kinship, political, educational, religious, recreational etc. By comparison, in single-stranded relationships, two people are linked by only one interest (Gluckman 1955: 18ff).

conversations with strangers met in the laundry, swimming pool, etc., as they are likely to understand and share the problems of life in Yulara. The houses are close together with little privacy, and the majority of staff have to share kitchen or bathroom facilities with others. Yulara locals are predominantly on friendly terms with their neighbours and there is much visiting other people's houses. As previously mentioned, the cost of housing is high. As electricity and water have to be paid for separately, but gas is included in the rent, most locals use gas cookers to heat their accommodation during the winter.

On average, staff remain in Yulara for eight months. Staff are drawn from throughout Australia, and there are some foreigners on working holidays.[26] Experience and qualifications amongst staff are diverse. Typically people come to work in Yulara in order to raise a large amount of money quickly. They often have a specific project in mind: a new car, trip round Europe, or the deposit on a house. Once the required sum has been raised they leave. It is easy to raise large sums quickly as there is little to do except work, and little to spend money on. It is said that if a couple works in Yulara for three years, they can raise enough money to buy a house outright when they leave. Many people in Yulara have two, or more, jobs. The impermanence of locals creates a situation whereby the resort is constantly having to recruit and train new staff; and this results in poor standards of service for tourists.[27]

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[26] The foreign staff (apart from the Japanese) are typically backpacking their way around Australia for a year. Under the terms of their visas, they are not allowed to work for the same employer for more than three months. Though legally they could stay in Yulara but change employer, typically they move on to another location.

[27] Koster (1977) discusses the reasons attributed to whites deciding to work in Frobisher Bay in Arctic Canada. Reasons included being unable to secure work in mainstream society, to clear debts or to escape personal circumstances like alcoholism, divorce or heartache. These reasons were attributed to fellow workers by their colleagues. This can be compared with the situation in Yulara, where some Yulara locals gave their own reasons for working there: being

As staff expect to remain only for a short time, they are reluctant to purchase more than the bare essentials needed to live. The houses are minimally furnished with settee, bed, table and chairs, fridge and a gas cooker. No bedding, crockery or cutlery is supplied. To purchase essential items from the supermarket is expensive, so it is not uncommon for staff to possess one plate, set of cutlery, a cup and a pan, and no other kitchen equipment. Furniture is improvised out of crates abandoned by the supermarket, or shelving is made out of bricks and planks. Many people scavenge at the rubbish tip, and can often retrieve serviceable equipment or furniture. There is also a shop called Rags to Riches selling second hand books, furniture, household items and clothing, and essentials can be bought there cheaply. Friendships and workmates are also important, as some items may be lent to those new to Yulara, and often when people leave Yulara they donate their equipment to neighbours or friends who have little. Having few household items does not preclude hosting dinner parties: often when asked to a dinner party one is asked to bring saucepans, roasting tins, plates and cutlery. Such items may also be borrowed from friends, neighbours or workmates. This practical assistance extends to other facilities: few staff have a bath in their accommodation, only a shower. Access to a bath is a useful item to trade. Remembering the frustration of not being able to soak in a bath, those in accommodation with a bath typically offer use of it to their friends, in

declared bankrupt and wanting to save money to start again; saving money for a holiday, house or business venture; and dissatisfaction with the mainstream 9 to 5 routine.

exchange for other favours. 'Girls' nights' often commence with all the women taking turns to have a long hot bath.[28]

There are also certain people who emerge as the 'scroungers': able to procure unlikely items to feed into the unofficial barter system that operates in Yulara. The resort sells off old furniture, pictures, lamps and ironing boards when it renovates the hotel rooms. 'Scroungers' may purchase all available stock and either sell it on, or barter it for other goods, so goods are constantly circulating in Yulara. Bartering, for goods or services, is one way in which locals control the amount of money which is given to the resort, which is generally seen as exploitative and expensive. Bartering between two individuals is common, but usually a 'scrounger' is required to negotiate a way through the extended bartering chains. Similarly to bartering, the unofficial currency in Yulara is beer, which is usually given in exchange for services such as assistance with erecting shade cloth, help with servicing a vehicle, gardening, or assistance generally. Some locals have specific talents like accountancy, massage, reflexology, hairdressing, and these skills are likely also to be bartered, or reimbursed with beer. Living in Yulara is recognised as stressful, and longer-term residents frequently escape to Alice Springs. On such excursions they are likely to have a list of items to purchase

[28]Riches (1977) details how whites in Anurivik, Arctic Canada, hold the public norms of hospitality and neighbourliness to counteract the privations of life in the arctic, where basic household items may be difficult to obtain, and in consequence there is extensive borrowing amongst whites. However, despite the public norm of generalised reciprocity, in private it is expected that assistance will be reciprocated, whites keeping a mental tally of hospitality. This situation does not appear to pertain in Yulara. Assistance is either reciprocated, bartered or rewarded with beer. I never heard complaints that hospitality had not been reciprocated, though often people expressed the intention of holding a dinner party for those who had frequently hosted them, explicitly stating that it was to return hospitality received.

for friends and colleagues. Mail order catalogues are also important for Yulara locals: items from clothing to engine parts can be purchased in this way.[29]

There is also a certain amount of theft that occurs from the hotels: linen, towels and crockery are the most commonly purloined items. Staff purchase fabric dye from the supermarket, and dye their towels dark or vibrant colours so they are not obviously stolen from the hotels (all hotel towels are a pale peach colour). Stolen items are also fed into the barter system. However, they are also a potential source of revenge for those who have fallen out with their neighbours. The resort employs a number of people as security officers, and they have the right to enter all premises without warrants. When the resort

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[29] Barth describes two spheres of exchange among the Mountain Fur: the cash sphere of the market, and the sphere of house building and labour, where assistance is exchanged for beer. Apart from minimal kinship obligations, Fur are free to allocate their time and labour as they wish. That there are two distinct spheres of exchange is marked by the fact that there are moral prohibitions on selling beer in the market, and on working for cash wages (1967). Riches (1975) argues that rather than there being moral prohibitions on commodity exchange, in other societies it may simply be illogical to exchange a rare commodity for an easily accessible one. He discusses Inuit spheres of exchange: limits on the amount of cash available in a community, plus the necessity of cash for purchasing unpredictably available luxury items, results in Inuit hoarding cash against future need. There are two spheres of exchange: the cash sphere; and the credit sphere where subsistence commodities are purchased from the local store. Movement between the two spheres is possible through gambling bullets (available in the credit sphere) for cash.

These ideas can be usefully applied to the situation of Yulara locals. It can be seen that there are effectively two spheres of exchange operating in Yulara amongst locals: the cash sphere for the purchase of food, rent, electricity and necessities; and the bartering and beer sphere for luxuries, assistance, labour and expertise (tourists have access only to the cash sphere). Although it is possible to purchase some items such as household goods from the resort, in practice locals are unwilling to give money to a company perceived as exploitative, and so rely on bartering to procure these items. Skills such as hairdressing and motor repairs can be paid for in cash through 'official' channels in the resort, but often they are bartered, or paid for in beer. Other skills, such as reflexology or accountancy are not available officially in the resort. Locals who draw on these skills do not pay for them with money, but with beer, or with returned specialised services. General assistance such as gardening, cooking or sewing are usually rewarded with beer. These spheres of exchange enable residents to gain access to a wide variety of goods and services, while minimising the amount of cash that is paid to the resort, where prices are inflated. This aim is further facilitated by locals purchasing large quantities of beer in Alice Springs prior to asking for assistance, so that beer does not have to be bought from the resort. This is obviously akin to Riches' ideas concerning hoarding of scarce resources against future requirements. The scarcity in this instance is manufactured by locals' moral stance towards the resort. A moral aspect is apparent also in these spheres of exchange in that it would be highly offensive to offer money for any services rendered. Parallels can also be drawn in this respect with Sahlins' ideas regarding balanced reciprocity:

wishes to sack an employee, but has no grounds to do so, security staff are dispatched to the person's house to search for stolen items. If stolen property is found, the person may be lawfully sacked. Those who wish to avenge themselves on others alert the security officers that their enemy has stolen property, knowing that the security officers will make a considerable fuss while searching the premises. This is embarrassing, intrusive and humiliating, even if stolen property is not recovered.

The conditions in Yulara mean that staff typically enjoy multiplex relationships with each other, and this holds despite the divergent background and experiences of locals. These relationships operate to overcome the difficulties of living in a remote location, and foster a sense of belonging amongst even short stay residents. This objective sense of community is deepened through participation in the numerous activities available for Yulara locals.

Community activities

Having dealt with the individual networks of relationships, I shall now turn to the wider community relations, and how they are manifested. In contrast to the rangers, whose sense of community is primarily symbolic, for Yulara locals the community is objectively evident through a series of institutions set up to counteract the privations of life in a remote location. Despite the fact that many Yulara locals stay for fewer than eight months, there is intense group activity, as demonstrated by the public meetings opposing the downgrading of Yulara township to the status of a resort, entertainments and fund raising

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cash is inappropriate in this sphere, as the direct exchanges occur between friends. Cash is

activities. Yulara locals can also be seen to recognise themselves as a symbolic community, facilitated through recognition of each other as locals.

Yulara locals adopt a 'work hard, play hard' ideology. They entertain themselves with dinner parties, barbecues and pool-side gatherings. They are also provided with a sports hall and gymnasium, residents' club, library, college, and video club. Organised weekly entertainment includes sports competitions, discos and film showings. Every month there is a church service taken by itinerant ministers of various denominations. Less frequent organised entertainment may take the form of jam sessions at the residents' club, jazz nights and fashion shows. Twice a year there is a formal, black-tie ball; and at Christmas there is a party with all beer, food and entertainment provided by the resort, and a outdoor carol service. T-shirts are given free to those attending the Christmas party and the balls, marking the date and the theme of the party. Locals wear T-shirts several years old, to display how long they have lived in Yulara. These T-shirts can be seen as another means by which locals express their community sentiment.

There are also numerous charity and fund raising events throughout the year, to raise money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service; the primary school; child-care services; or for nation-wide charities such as childhood leukaemia. Events include a pram race, quiz nights and a talent contest called Starmaker night. Charity events raise considerable amounts of money. At the Crop-a-cop night in August, to raise money for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, prominent members of the community such as police officers, senior resort managers, the clinic nurse and the mechanic volunteer to have their heads shaved, on

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evidenced in negative reciprocity: exchange for profit (Sahlins 1974: 194 *et passim*).

condition certain sums are pledged. The operations manager of the resort consented to have his head shaved on condition that $1000 was pledged. Ten people immediately gave $100 each. The actual head shaving occurs in the residents' club, where there is an auction for the privilege of shaving the volunteers. Some bid up to $500 to do this.

A symbolic sense of community is evident in the exclusive knowledge about people and events which Yulara locals share. As in many small communities, gossip is important: who is leaving, who is dating whom, job opportunities, who got sacked and why. When I got married in Alice Springs, my husband's plane ticket to join me in Alice Springs was marked 'Here comes the groom' even though we had not broadcast the date of our wedding. Gossip also alerts residents to the activities of the resort management, such as using the security officers to find grounds for sacking staff when the resort is overstaffed. Exclusive knowledge also works to warn those at community parties where the police breath tests are taking place. At such events, word soon spreads that the police are waiting in certain locations, and those who have overindulged opt to walk home.

Possibly because they live and work in such close proximity, there is a general interest in other residents' lives, and this is often manifested in preferential treatment. Locals are often served ahead of tourists in the Post Office, left over food in the petrol station is given free to locals at the end of the evening, and locals tend to get better service in the supermarket. Even when they have left Yulara, locals find themselves working with those they had previously encountered in Yulara, and they often alert each other to job

possibilities in their new situations. Those in supervisory or management positions actively assist previous Yulara workmates in their new situation.

Body

Unlike the rangers, Yulara locals do not display distinctive modes of adorning or maintaining their bodies. However, their bodies are subject to stresses peculiar to Yulara. Many Yulara locals have more than one job, so they work long hours for extended periods. As they are intending to leave as quickly as possible, commonly staff do not take up holiday leave, preferring to be paid in lieu. For those working as tour guides, their lives are dictated by the times of sunrise and sunset: tourists wish to photograph the changing colours on Uluṟu at such times. During the summer, the sun rises just after 5 am, so tourists have to be collected from the resort in time to transport them to the sunrise viewing area. It is common for tour guides to start work before 4 am, in order to clean buses, collect packed breakfasts for tourists, and complete vehicle checks before commencing the tour. Sunset during the summer is late; after 8 p.m., so once they have driven tourists back to their hotels, cleaned and unpacked their vehicles, guides may find themselves leaving work after 9 p.m. Those who conduct the extended tours to Kings Canyon or Alice Springs find they work even longer days. For tour guides living in Yulara, there is often a break of a few hours in the day between conducting a sunrise tour and starting a sunset tour. Often they take this opportunity to sleep. Yulara is characterised by staff eating, sleeping and socialising at disparate times. Consequently, Yulara locals are predominantly tired, overworked and stressed. Rather than this causing tensions between those living in close proximity, it becomes a

source of common sympathy. Sleep is a valued commodity, and one's own sleep and the sleep of others is protected. It is unacceptable to wake someone sleeping during the day, especially if you know they have been working long hours, or have early morning shifts. It is acceptable to leave a dinner party early if one has to get up early the next morning: no-one protests or tries to cajole the person into staying longer: everyone is aware of how precious those few hours sleep are. Interestingly, though, because people are working and sleeping at different times, they also socialise at different times; so there may be parties occurring at all times of the day and night. This is seen as normal and understandable, and no-one complains unless the noise level from the party interrupts others' sleep.

Tour guides suffer from specific complaints apart from the common lack of sleep. As they are outside for large portions of the day, they have to ensure they are protected from the sun, which will burn in minutes during the summer. Also, they have to drink plenty of water to guard against heat stroke, which can kill. It is recommended that people drink at least a litre of water per hour to prevent heat stroke. Guides find this uncomfortable, as drinking this quantity means the body is cooled properly and so they need to urinate. On a long walk around Uluṟu or through the Valley of the Winds at Kata Tjuṯa this can be embarrassing for guides, so they learn to drink copious amounts of water before and after a tour, and to sip at a bottle of frozen water during the tour to avoid heat stress. Even so, commonly guides return from long tours with a headache and fatigue, which is cured by drinking plenty of water and sleeping in an air-conditioned room. During the winter, early in the morning a cold wind gusts around the side of Uluṟu, spraying sand. Later in the morning

it is still cold, but the sun is bright. These conditions: cold wind whipping up sand then harsh sunshine, provoke cold sores, and so guides who have been conducting extended walking tours are often seen with brown iodine stains around their mouths, and are constantly applying cold sore cream in an attempt to prevent cold sores.

Other specific occupational problems include eyestrain for those working at computer terminals at airports and booking desks; aching legs for those waitressing; and backache for gardeners, bus cleaners and chambermaids. It is unsurprising that the beauty salon also offers therapeutic massage, and there is a physiotherapist working in the resort.

Sex

Yulara locals' sex relations are shaped by access to partners and communication within the resort. As there are over a thousand Yulara locals, despite the fact that some are in permanent or family relationships, there is a large base of people from which to select a partner. That the composition of this group is constantly changing provides a greater number from which to select, but it also makes relationships tentative. As many people only expect to stay in Yulara for a short time, some are reluctant to start relationships; and those who do may find their partner leaves the resort after a few months. With this in mind, there are two reactions to the transitory nature of locals. Either people regard the relationship as temporary from the outset with a 'good while it lasts' attitude; or they invest early on in the relationship, and plan to move on with their partner when he or she leaves. This means that relationships are

either very casual and uninvolved; or they are quickly very serious, with long term plans being made in the early weeks of the relationship.

However, Yulara locals often complain that there are few people with whom they share common interests. Although people make many friends, few last beyond the duration of life in Yulara: they are short term, convenient, a reciprocal way of making a difficult life more bearable.[30] The same applies to partners: there may be few people with whom one finds an affinity. For those living long term in Yulara, or who are unwilling to enter casual relationships, loneliness is endemic. Similarly to the rangers, there is also an unofficial 'waiting list' for partners, which once again only seems to hold amongst women. The Yulara hairdresser complained to me that she had been in the resort only for three weeks when she started to date her current boyfriend, and female friends complained bitterly, not because they too wanted a relationship with him, but because they had been waiting longer for someone suitable to come along! I often heard such sentiments expressed, the protagonists seemingly unaware of the apparent contradiction in such statements. The men do not have such scruples: when they hear a new woman is to enter their sphere of work they immediately want to know what she looks like, and assume she will be attracted to them. When the unsuspecting woman does arrive, she is inundated by men offering to show her around, offering assistance, meals and parties. This, of course, facilitates entry to the

[30]Koster (1977) reports similar circumstances in Frobisher Bay, in the Canadian Arctic, where white workers find their friends leave frequently; and eventually they decide not to invest time and energy in making new friends. In Yulara, long-stay locals frequently told me that there were very few people with whom they felt an affinity, and when those people left, they experienced intense loneliness, which some tried to overcome by working even harder. In this situation, it is likely that the person will leave, or attempt to leave, within a year.

community as the new arrival quickly makes new friends and acquires a large circle of acquaintances on whom she can call.

Casual sexual encounters are possible amongst Yulara locals, or with tourists. As tourists move on after a couple of days at most, these encounters are likely to cause minimal embarrassment: casual sex with locals can mean that gossip operates to broadcast the fact, and chance meetings with the person in question are likely, as it is such a small community. Gossip also operates to broadcast who is dating whom, and locals are notoriously nosy and indiscreet in their quest for the latest romantic information. I was warned never to buy condoms from the supermarket. One local woman, senior management in the resort, bought condoms and was asked by the girl on the checkout, "Who are you rooting then?" Contraceptives must be bought on holidays away from Yulara.

There is also a strong gay community in Yulara, some of whom are local 'characters' and the subject of much joking and gossip. One gay man is a source of entertainment as he bought a very masculine looking truck, and replaced the tyres with monster tyres. Amused locals regarded this as his attempt to deny his sexuality by being more masculine than the 'real men'. Gays are also subject to great hostility: joking about gays is rarely good natured. At one of the balls, a gay man won a prize. When his name was called out, it was muttered that he was 'a queer', and when he went up to collect his prize some shouted "He's a poof!". Hostility towards gays is exhibited by both men and women, and some display extreme homophobia. One driver refused to leave his seat when he realised that some of his passengers had just come from the Sydney Gay Mardi Gras, as he was convinced they would attack him.

The gay men seem to socialise together, and often accompany each other in leering at tourists.

Attitudes towards Anangu/the National Park

In this section I will discuss the attitudes of Yulara locals towards the National Park, the rangers, and towards Anangu. Firstly, though, I will outline the development of the relationship between the resort itself and the Park.

The Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is operated by the Commonwealth, but the Yulara resort was built and owned (until December 1997) by the Northern Territory government, which had hoped also to control the Park. Consequently, the relationship between the two has been characterised by mutual hostility; exacerbated by the fact that Park staff regard the tourists as the enemy trying to destroy the Park; and the resort regards the Park as commercially naive and overly pandering to the wishes of Anangu.[31] The hostility has been heightened by the fact that each side refuses to recognise its dependence on the other. However, the relationship between the Park and the resort has slowly been improving. As Grant Hunt, the resort Managing Director stated, "The guest needs to believe in the rapport between the resort and the Park." To this end, the resort pledged money and land towards the Aboriginal boarding school, and agreed to build a swimming pool for Mutitjulu residents. This was not as benevolent as initially appears. There being no swimming pool in Mutitjulu, Anangu use resort swimming pools, especially the pool situated at the coach campground. The resort disapproved of Anangu using the facilities, so the offer of their own pool is less to do with

philanthropy and more to do with providing Anangu with no excuse to use the resort pools. In 1996, the committee organising the Yulara Christmas party decided that children from Mutitjulu would not be invited to the children's Christmas party, until it was pointed out that the Mutitjulu children's parents owned the rock which provided everyone with an income. Anangu also resented the fact that the resort would not allow them to attend the New Year's Eve party held in the town square. That relations between Yulara and the Park/ Mutitjulu are still strained is exemplified by the Park entry ticket fiasco already discussed, and the problems in running the Pitjantjatjara language course for Yulara locals.

As to locals, rather than the resort itself, attitudes towards the Park and Anangu are mixed. For the majority of Yulara locals, they visit Uluru and the Cultural Centre as part of their orientation course when they first arrive in Yulara. For many, this is the only time they will visit Uluru, and it is common to find locals who have never visited Kata Tjuta. Such people seem to be barely aware that there is a National Park on their doorstep. However, for tour guides, and those directly involved with advising tourists or booking them onto tours, their attitudes towards the Park and Anangu depend on context. Basically, when talking to tourists they promote a positive view of the Park and Anangu culture, but in private interactions they express frustration and contempt.

When providing commentary on the area to tourists, guides admire the work of the Park, and praise the ideology of 'working together'. They display admiration for Anangu culture and often encourage tourists to learn some

[31]See also chapter two where I discuss the road signs and place names debacle.

Pitjantjatjara words. Unfortunately, many guides cannot pronounce the words themselves, and insist on teaching tourists to pronounce Anangu as 'Ana-NOO'. Some see Anangu as a valuable resource who could make their commentary more interesting. I was constantly being asked for details of Anangu culture so that it could be related by tour guides. Leigh from AAT Kings told me, "I love the Anangu, I do. I think their culture is so interesting. I've read a lot about it, and that course we did in the Park, I just wanted to know more. I want to go into the desert with some of the old guys and just ask them about their culture and the old ways. I wish we employed the Anangu. It would be great for the tourists to have one of them sitting there on the bus, and when we got to a place, he could just tell us about it, tell all the stories."

I was told by one guide, "Some of our guides may be racists in the depot, but on tour we won't take Abo bashing from the tourists. No way." This attitude is ably demonstrated by the fact that the tour company AAT Kings maintains the Anangu Tours minibus, and AAT Kings guides drive the tourists to meet their Anangu guides. The whole of the journey into the Park is filled with a commentary detailing how fascinating and adaptive Anangu culture is to conditions in the desert; yet when not in the presence of tourists, the drivers refer to the minibus as 'the coon cab'. Similarly, when there were public meetings to discuss the new Visitor Management Strategy for the Park, the fact that no Anangu representatives from Mutitjulu or the Board of Management attended provoked angry criticism from the representatives of the tourism industry. One said, "This meeting is an indication of what this area is about. The community (Mutitjulu) is only 16 kms away yet there's no one here. Yet there are people here from Canberra and Sydney, from the major

operators and airlines. There's a lot of key people here but there's no one from the Board of Management."

There is also hostility towards the Park, and the rangers, who are commonly described as 'ferals' and 'blacker than the blacks'.[32] Specifically, during the Tour Operators' Workshop in March 1997, there was resentment from participants that white rangers seemed to conceal information from them, regarding them as 'stupid bus drivers'. The participants relished the contact they had with Anangu, and felt privileged to have them explain stories and demonstrate tracking and fire-making; but they were frustrated by the fact that their questions were never answered, but were written down by the white teachers who said they would be addressed at the end of the course. At the end of the course, there was no time to do this. However, although the course fostered respect for Anangu, and a determination to talk about the issues raised by the course, within a few weeks this had all been forgotten and forsaken in favour of the old and trusted routines. The course, known as the ANCA course (for Australian Nature Conservation Agency) was then referred to as 'the wanker course', and new recruits required to attend it were warned that they would get little from it.

There is an interesting means of communication between the tour guides and the National Park; and it is used by tour guides to gossip about each other. In the Coach Captains' room in the Cultural Centre, where guides

[32] It can be seen that both rangers and Yulara locals use the rangers' perceived closeness to nature as a symbolic boundary between the two communities, but ascribing different values to it. For the rangers, being close to nature has a positive valuation; for Yulara locals, the sobriquet 'feral' is negative, implying an unkempt appearance. Interestingly, the term feral/ wild is also used by Anangu (and has been recorded for other Aboriginal groups) to distinguish between those in settled communities and those living in the bush, who are deemed to be wild and uncivilised.

can relax while their tourists look around the Cultural Centre, is a blank notebook labelled 'Communications Book'. It is referred to though, as 'the Spite Book'. It is supposed to be used by guides to alert the Park to potential problems: fallen fences, camp dogs worrying tourists, pressure on art sites; or to express ideas concerning more effective visitor management, e.g. requests for shade shelters, extra toilets or water facilities within the Park. The rationale for this book is that the guides are in the Park every day, dealing with tourists, and so are more likely to be aware of problem areas than rangers, who are few in number and try to avoid contact with tourists. Park staff assume that if guides can write their complaints they will feel empowered, even though they have little intention of following up any of the suggestions, and in fact rarely even read the book. Although the book is used occasionally to warn of repairs or problems in the Park, it is mostly used to complain about Park policy and to gossip about other tour operators. Specifically, entries detail offences such as spending too long in the waterholes or art sites when there was another group waiting to get in; driving too fast past the climb carpark where tourists have to cross the road to reach the toilets; and parking buses on the verges and churning up the sand. There are also numerous entries akin to graffiti: 'X is a queer'; 'Kings drivers are bastards' etc.

Attitudes towards tourists

Tourists are generally perceived as rude and stupid. At social events, it is common for Yulara locals to spend the majority of the time relating stories demonstrating the ignorance and ill-manners of the tourists they have to serve. The stories act to demonstrate a symbolic marker between locals and tourists.

As the safety of tourists is the responsibility of locals, it is frustrating and dangerous when tourists will not listen to advice from locals, who may warn them that they are inappropriately dressed to climb Uluṟu, that they need to wear a hat, not to put their hands into burrows in the sand-dunes as there may be snakes in there; or that they should drink more water. Accustomed to the excessive heat and flies, locals are experienced in surviving in the harsh conditions, and they derive a malicious glee from watching the discomfort of tourists who are unprepared for the extreme conditions, and typically have inappropriate clothing and footwear, flabby pale skin, and swathe themselves in flynets and are constantly swiping at flies. Despite their demands and wealth, the tourists' helplessness is evident in comparison to the experienced, competent locals. Through telling stories about tourists, locals dissipate their frustration in dealing with people who often treat them rudely, yet depend on them literally for their physical survival and comfort.

Tourists are also stereotyped according to nationality: Americans are 'Yanks' and stupid, often demanding; Germans are 'Krauts' and complain about the service they receive; the Japanese mindlessly follow each other like sheep; British people are 'Poms' and complain about the heat and flies. Tourists who are excessively demanding can occasionally redeem themselves in the eyes of locals by giving large tips. Tourists who are exceptionally personable are so much in the minority that if they attempt to tip, often their tip will be refused. On such occasions locals explain they felt it would be like receiving a tip from a friend, and so unacceptable.

There are a number of favourite stories which are always related to demonstrate the unreasonableness and stupidity of tourists. My personal

favourites are tourist questions of "How many undiscovered caves are there in Uluṟu?", "Is there a UFO within the rock?" and, seeing a wedge-tailed eagle's nest high in a mulga tree, "Is that an emu's nest up there?". As an anthropologist, locals often explained my presence as "Kim's finding out why the tourists leave their brains behind when they go on holiday."[33]

Conclusion

This chapter has raised two interesting issues. Firstly, why is it that in this remote, difficult location, the whitefellas have formed two distinctive communities, and that these communities operate so differently? It could have been expected that they would have worked together to overcome the privations and difficulties of life at Uluṟu, instead of being so hostile to each other. Or, that having formulated two distinctive symbolic communities vis-à-vis each other, each would also have institutions which facilitate life in such a difficult location. Secondly, there is relatively little written about white workers in indigenous situations or about workers in the tourism industry. I feel that this is a glaring omission in tourism studies, and that studies of workers in such resort locations are pertinent and may illuminate relations between the tourism industry and indigenous people. Further, many anthropologists now work in communities that have a whitefella presence, but the relations of whitefellas to each other and to the indigenous population are

[33] It could be argued that tourists, Yulara locals and rangers display more similarities than differences. In such instances, it is necessary to highlight the symbolic boundaries between groups who are ostensibly similar. Such responses have been detailed by other anthropologists, for example reporting local constructions of southerners relocating to

largely neglected. Often, the only mention of whitefella interactions occurs in self-reflexive writing where the anthropologist him/herself details the way s/he was received by the indigenous population, and rarely discusses relations with other whites there. (The papers discussed in this chapter are notable exceptions to this anthropological lacuna). Both practices result in partial ethnographies. As anthropological fieldwork is now conducted in complicated, often politicised areas, these complexities should be represented in ethnography.

Whalsay, in Shetland (Cohen 1987); of tourists and newcomers in Wanet, Yorkshire (Rapport 1993); and of strangers in Elmdon, Essex (Strathern 1981).

Chapter Seven: *nintiringkupai*[1]

"We ask you to record the information here with your bodies, in your memory. Use your eyes, ears and brain. Remember things rather than stick them on a film." Barbara Tjikatu on the appropriate behaviour at Uluṟu.

In this chapter I will examine the essential tension that exists between Aṉangu and tourists' understandings of Uluṟu. It will be demonstrated that the way each group interacts with the landscape will impact on the way Aṉangu messages about their culture and relationship to the land are received by tourists. Although there are several ways in which anthropologists examine indigenous relationships with the landscape, which are briefly covered in the initial part of this chapter, for my analysis I have found phenomenology and embodiment theory to be the most pertinent ways to explore the contrasting experiences of tourists and Aṉangu at Uluṟu. The phenomenological approach to landscape examines the way in which landscapes are dwelled in and used by people. The specific habits in using the landscape are prior to, and shape, subsequent intellectualisations. Complementary to this, embodiment theory is an aspect of phenomenology which argues that the objective world is mediated through the body. I shall use these two approaches to show how the landscape at Uluṟu is differently dwelled in by tourists and Aṉangu, and how these contrasting phenomenological experiences affect the way in which they perceive the landscape.

[1] A place of learning. This horrendous sign greets those entering the part of the Cultural Centre dealing with the management of the Park, role of the Board, and Aṉangu traditional land

The anthropology of landscape

Landscape has only recently been directly the topic of anthropological analysis. However, it has always been present in anthropology as a framing convention i.e. the objective landscape relating to a particular people; and to illustrate the specific meanings people have imparted to their surroundings, i.e. the landscape we come to understand through fieldwork (Hirsch 1995). Definition is the initial problem confronting the anthropology of landscape since landscape as a concept emerged in specific historical and social circumstances. 'Landscape' was introduced into English during the sixteenth century as an artists' technical term originating from the Dutch *landschap* (Hirsch 1995). The word then came to be used to describe scenes that reminded the viewer of landscape paintings. Thomas documents how at the time that landscape painting developed in Italy and Flanders, land came to be seen as a commodity: landscape painting and the idea of landscape emerged concomitantly with capitalism (1993). As an idea landscape came to symbolise an idyllic Arcadia, opposed to the hard work and everyday existence of the town. Landscapes signalled the possibility of change from the everyday to the idealised portrayal of life found in landscape painting. However, it is difficult to isolate landscape from other associated terms: place, space, inside, outside, image and representation.

Hirsch analyses painted landscapes as encompassing polar opposites: the everyday and what he terms 'potentiality'. The actuality of everyday existence corresponds to place, inside and image; opposed and yet related is

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management practices.

the background potentiality of space, outside and representation (Hirsch 1995). Parkin also summons oppositions, defining landscape as territoriality, habitat and background; in opposition to the foreground which is marked by people and history. Parkin questions the relationship between territory (the term he uses instead of landscape) and identity, and asks if it is possible to belong to a group which does not share a territory as a reference point. He argues that the experiences of global movement, the transnational community and dislocation of indigenous people indicates that cultural traditions are often relocated and inscribed onto new territories (1998). However, I contend that this may not always be the case: Andrew Uluṟu told me that he had met Aboriginal people living in Sydney who had lost their land. He described them as 'poor buggers' because they did not know their traditions, culture and stories.

Landscape is experienced and apprehended in different ways in different cultures. Bender (1993) discusses how in the West landscape is predominantly visual and ego-centred. In other cultures this may not be the case. Layton also discusses this point, and describes how farming communities view the landscape from a fixed point of view, whereas nomadic people have a perspective that includes a number of equal points (1995). Thomas (1993) highlights the fact that since the Renaissance, vision has been privileged over the other senses: in art the three dimensional representation effectively situates the viewer outside the painting. He compares this with prehistoric and non-western art which portrays place as an impression, feel, meaning or significance, rather than as a realistic depiction of its outward appearance.

In terms of analysis, several writers see landscape as a process. Ingold criticises geographers Daniel and Cosgrove for their definition of landscape as 'a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing or symbolising surroundings'; as this definition presents landscape as static (quoted in Hirsch 1995). Thomas discusses the way archaeological notions of the landscape have changed from an emphasis on artefacts, to seeing the landscape as 'a continuous record of human behaviour'. He argues for a phenomenological approach to landscape and its 'rejection of the notion that the places where we live are purely external objects'. Instead of thinking of space as a 'container around us', he argues that we should understand space in terms of our dwelling through it. 'Dwelling' is defined as a 'continuous being which unites human subjects with their environment', and allows an appreciation of, and engagement with, the world through using it, rather than by examining it from the outside (Thomas 1993).

Tilley offers a useful analysis of landscape by combining phenomenology, cultural anthropology, human geography and interpretative work in archaeology. He also sees landscape as a process, and people as dwelling through it. He traces the history of the subject: in the 1960s and 70s 'space' was seen by geographers and archaeologists as an abstract container in which human activity took place. The activity and the space were conceptually and physically different from each other. Tilley offers and alternative view of space as a medium rather than a container, 'a socially produced space combines the cognitive, the physical and the emotional' (1994: 10ff). He argues that spaces are not uniform, but have different densities of human attachment. Tilley argues that phenomenology provides a satisfactory means

of understanding human engagement with the landscape by understanding things from the standpoint of the subject, and how the world is apprehended through the subject's body. Tilley also uses the term 'dwelling' to describe the vantage point of the body in relation to the world (p.13).

The importance to anthropology of a processual perspective on landscape is highlighted by several writers. Bender writes 'the landscape is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate and contest it. It is part of the way in which identities are created and disputed, whether as individual, group, or nation-state' (1993). Hirsch also describes the way landscape has been represented as static in the western tradition, but is actually a cultural process whereby the natural landscape is transformed into a cultural landscape by the actions of a social group (1995). Similarly, Lovell (1998) discusses the importance of memory to perpetuate the concepts through which landscape is culturally constructed, created and defined through human experience. She writes that 'specific places are extracted from undifferentiated space to become imbued with meaning', an idea which is taken up by Archetti in his analysis of Argentinean football (1998). He argues that national identities depend on the 'mystique' of certain territories which give a sense of national history, and are repositories of myth and memories which underline the culture's historical persistence, acting to shape contemporary meanings. Archetti shows how national landscapes are unique and combine geographical locality with stories of legendary heroes and their actions. He describes how *gauchos* became symbols for the nation through their occupation of the wild plains and areas free from Western technology and urbanisation. Footballers are described as *pibe*: young boys who inhabit the same areas as the *gauchos*

and embodying the ideals of freedom and creativity. Emotive national landscapes are also discussed by Silverman (1999) in an analysis of the 1997 Peruvian hostage crisis. Foreign diplomats, high ranking Peruvian officials, and Japanese and Peruvian businessmen were taken hostage by terrorists at a party hosted by the Japanese ambassador to celebrate Emperor Akihito's birthday. The hostages were rescued after Peruvian commandos tunnelled into the building and killed all of the terrorists. The rescue mission was named 'Operacion Chavin de Huantar' after Peru's three thousand year old highland temple whose interior is a warren of tunnels. President Fujimori, who conceived the rescue plan, claimed to have had the idea after dreaming of the temple. The temple is the site of the centre of Peru's first pan-regional culture, perceived as the 'mother culture' of the Peruvian nation. It has been appropriated in the past to assert Peruvian nationhood, and symbols from the temple have been used by groups wishing to assert Peruvian independence. The use of the temple's name for the rescue mission thereby allowed President Fujimori to assert his own Peruvianness (in the face of criticism over his Japanese parentage), and linked his government with an ancient, highly successful civilisation.

Other cultures have distinctive ways of ascribing meaning to the landscape. I shall present examples of Aboriginal and Melanesian attitudes towards the landscape. Layton (1995), discussing Anangu in the Western Desert, shows that there are two discourses which shape Anangu relations with, and understandings of, the landscape. The first discourse concerns subsistence, and is similar to the Western notion of ecology. Anangu often discuss places in terms of resources: food, water, hunting. The landscape is

also discussed in terms of *Tjukurpa*: the actions of the ancestors. The two discourses are linked through rights to use areas: if one has rights and obligations to a country it is through knowing the associated *Tjukurpa*, maintaining the land (clearing waterholes, increase rites etc.) and through using its resources.[2] Morphy (1995) also highlights the links between the ancestral past and contemporary action for the Yolngu of Arnhem land, and points out that 'landscape is part of peoples' identity but is simultaneously part of the identity of the ancestral beings. Human identity thus is shared with something that has an existence independent of the person and which has the same origin: the ancestral past'.

Kuchler, discussing Malangan art in New Ireland, Melanesia similarly draws a distinction between landscape of memory and landscape as memory (1993). The former is typical of the Western conception of landscape as a record of significant human actions. By comparison, conceptualising the landscape as memory recognises the processual aspect of landscape (typically found in Aboriginal paintings which depict emotions and relationships with the land). Kuchler discusses the production of funerary sculptures which act as tokens exchanged for use of land. In the Melanesian context, land is circulated as a commodity able to be shared, divided and loaned. The sculptures provide a code following each mortuary ceremony that details how the land should be reallocated, and allows for the previous allocations and uses of the land to be remembered. The land progresses through a series of appearances: garden land to settlement, settlement to garden to forest. The sculptures do not depict the

[2]See chapter three: *Tjukurpa* for a full discussion of rights to land and how these may be acquired.

allocation of land, but metaphorically represent the land's transmission. Fascinatingly, it can also be seen that whereas in the Western context, the visual is given primacy, in this context, odour is the link between cultivated land, affines and the sculptures. Odour is believed to come from an island beyond the horizon and is found in taro tubers, being released when the tubers are roasted. Each odour is associated with a particular clan. These tubers are eaten by the person making the sculpture, and the odour is said to be transmitted into the sculpture. When the sculptures rot, they give off this distinctive odour; thus the odour is transformed into an object of remembrance, which also reflects the allocation of land (Kuchler 1993).

The same landscape may be perceived differently by different groups of people. Morphy, in his analysis of the Roper Bar land claim in Northern Australia (1993). He shows how the land is viewed by European objectors as economic potential as a cattle stock route, as a tourist attraction and as a repository of European history: 'landscape is given a value by its place in history and by its economic potential... Place names inevitably lag behind'. By contrast, for the Ngalakan Aboriginal people, the land is important in that it embodies spiritual links to the Dreaming ancestors who continue to ensure its fecundity. Place names refer to actions performed by the ancestors and indicate the spiritual force located there beneath the surface of the earth. Morphy questions why it is the same places that come to have significance for both Europeans and Ngalakan people. He finds that the different uses of the land by Europeans and Aborigines come to interact with one another. On contact, it was likely that out of all of the sites used by Aboriginal people, one would become a cattle station or place of European settlement. Then,

Aboriginal people ensured their survival by working for colonialists as station hands and police trackers. Having moved to these areas, Aboriginal religious links to those areas would be reinforced, resulting in this becoming the major centre for ceremonial activity. Thus, both Europeans and Aborigines find they have strong attachments to the same areas, albeit for vastly different reasons. This is also true for Uluṟu, as will be demonstrated in the next section. This chapter will examine how Aṉangu and tourists have different phenomenological experiences of the landscape at Uluṟu, and how this impinges on their understandings of each other. As Tilley (1994) writes, human engagement with the environment must be understood from the vantage point of the subject dwelling in it. In the following section I will discuss the 'dwelling' which constructs the experiences of Aṉangu, compared with that of tourists.

Uluṟu: place of many landscapes

Chapter two of this thesis outlines the history of Uluṟu, and I now wish to interrogate that information, using notions of landscape. Following Bender's (1993) assertion that the landscape is never inert but is 'reworked, appropriated and contested', I will show how the landscape at Uluṟu has been central in certain discourses throughout history, including pioneering discourse, tourism, World Heritage, land rights and *Tjukurpa.* In this section I will examine the different ways in which Uluṟu has been presented and understood. In the initial years of settlement, Australia was perceived as an empty continent (*terra nullius*) which was to be occupied by European settlers. Historically perceived as on the opposite side of the world, opposite European

feet (hence the antipodes) since Ancient Greece, the first Europeans found themselves in a paradoxical situation: being European, yet also opposite. To confound the paradox, initial European inhabitants searched for others from whom to be 'opposite' and accordingly created Aboriginal people as 'opposite': savage, primitive, the antithesis of European culture and civilisation. Paintings from the early years of the continent presented Aborigines as weird savage creatures, barely human; hence commenced the romantic idea as Australia as a place for conquering explorers, the adventurous, the heroic. When the first free settlers arrived, however, Australia was painted in the tradition of English landscape painters: sweeping vistas of undulating terrain and grey gum trees. But such landscapes need inhabitants and a history. Their prior claim over the land having been denied, Aborigines were portrayed in these rural idylls as ghostly figures, noble savages; settlers thereby appropriated a history for the continent which they had previously ignored. At the time, it was believed that Aborigines would soon in actuality become ghosts: all societies were believed to move through definite stages of social organisation: it was held that the primitive Aborigines, through inevitable evolution, would sooner or later die out (McClean 1998).

The images of a wild interior have persisted, and have been reinforced by the journals of the early explorers, who ventured into the centre of Australia in search of a giant inland sea. Many explorers, such as Giles, who was the first European to see Kata Tjuṯa, found that horses could not cope with the harsh, dry climate. Later explorers used camels and experienced Afghan cameleers to pursue their explorations. Their reactions towards Aborigines encountered on these explorations indicate the belief that

Aborigines were a primitive, doomed race. William Dampier, who explored the north-west coast in 1688, considered local Aborigines to be 'the miserablest people in the world' with 'no houses... the earth affords them no food at all' (quoted in Hughes 1987: 48). Nearly two centuries later, in 1873, the explorer Gosse remarked that at Ayers Rock he saw 'native fires quite close to us and soon two natives came for water and, after making signs, they came up to us but seemed terribly frightened. I fancy they must have heard of whites before' (quoted in Cartwright 1994). F.R George, in 1905, said he had heard of the ferocity of Aborigines from the Petermann Ranges, and was told that they would spear white men (*ibid.*). Undertaking a survey of the mammals in Central Australia, Finlayson complained of the flies, excessive heat and biting ants; and admired his Aboriginal guides for their fine physiques, endurance of heat, thirst and hunger which enabled them to cover long distances, and their skills in hunting and tracking (Finlayson 1945: 59f). Even the anthropologist Mountford, during his 1940 expedition to Uluṟu, mentioned in his journal that Aṉangu children seemed impervious to the cold, and admired the surefootedness and physical fitness of his guide when they climbed Mount Conner. However, he does comment that Aboriginal people habitually appear 'grimy', unless they grease their bodies and 'afterwards look clean and attractive' (Mountford's personal journal, 1940 expedition). Thus continued the romantic view of Aboriginal people as comfortable in the harsh environment. European explorers, describing their own discomfort, ascribe heroic attributes to themselves for having endured conditions that only Aborigines are adequately able to deal with. These notions persist, as will be

demonstrated later in this chapter, when I discuss this distinctive European experience of the Central Australian landscape.

That the discourse of exploration and adventure dominates European notions of Uluṟu is not surprising, for Uluṟu is in the centre of the interior, the epitome of the wild outback, the furthest away from the cultural exterior. Also, Uluṟu is visually arresting: there is its sheer physical size, and there are dramatic colour changes from grey to blood red throughout the day. Uluṟu's physical domination of the landscape is reinforced by its shape: its sides do not slope gently, but rise up violently from a totally flat surrounding plain of sand and spinifex.

This representation of Uluṟu as an exciting place has persisted, and can be seen to inform a large proportion of tourism advertising. Overwhelmingly, tourist promotions for the interior of Australia portray it as a wild, romantic place of adventures and unique experiences. Simondson has analysed tourism advertising literature, and highlights the myth that persists in such brochures that the 'real' Australia is to be found in the centre, separated from 'modern' Australia. She writes that tourists think of themselves travelling to a 'lesser' culture: one that is perceived to be closer to nature and man's primitive origins (Simondson 1995). Many tourists expect to travel in a four wheel drive vehicle when they arrive at Uluṟu, and are disappointed by the tarmacked roads. However, Craig Catchlove, from the Northern Territory Tourism Commission told me that tourists want adventure, but they require soft adventure: they do not want to experience too much discomfort, or to be in any danger. Often their requirements are more for evidence of adventure (their photographs taken beside a four wheel drive that appears to be in the middle of nowhere,

but in actuality is parked at the side of a tarmacked road) to show to friends and family back home, rather than for the adventure itself.

Uluṟu is also famous as a World Heritage area, and once again it can be seen that the criteria for Uluṟu's inscription are inherently Western-based notions of what constitutes a landscape. Uluṟu has a double World Heritage inscription (one of only nineteen places in the World to have a double inscription). The first was awarded in 1987 for Uluṟu's natural values: it is an area of outstanding natural beauty, it has a unique and ongoing geology, and there is the presence of rare and endangered native species within the National Park. This inscription emphasises the importance of Uluṟu as a visual site, and Uluṟu as a pristine wilderness evidenced by the presence of rare species, which must be acknowledged and preserved. The second World Heritage listing was in 1994, when Uluṟu was inscribed as a cultural landscape of universal importance. This inscription was awarded on the basis of Aṉangu's ongoing association with the land, the fact that it is managed according to traditional Aboriginal land management practices, and that indigenous knowledge is instrumental in maintaining the Park. That the second inscription contradicts the first is ignored by most: geology contradicts *Tjukurpa*, and the beauty of the landscape is meaningless to Aṉangu.

To Aṉangu, as people who dwell permanently in this landscape, Uluṟu is important on three interconnected levels which contrast with the piṟanpa appreciation of the area: as a spiritual place, as a area for practical subsistence, and a place where they successfully fought a land claims case using piṟanpa law. However, it must be stressed that Aṉangu have never accepted the doctrine of *terra nullius*, and so in fighting a land claims case they were not

seeking to have Uluṟu returned to them, as, so far as they are concerned they never lost ownership of it; but they wished to have that custodianship recognised in whitefella law. Aṉangu do not talk of 'landscape' but of *ngura* or 'country'. To them, Uluṟu does not comprise a single feature: rather it is a collection of discrete sites and different people have responsibility for different areas of the rock. Uluṟu is not a beautiful place to be preserved, but the place of waterholes and ancestral power, of ceremonies, obligations and a chequered post-contact history.

But in order to understand the crucially different apprehensions of Uluṟu held by tourists and Aṉangu, it is necessary to move away from discourses and intellectualisations, and examine how each party experiences the landscape phenomenologically, and contrast their ways of dwelling at Uluṟu. I shall illustrate Aṉangu's phenomenological experience of Uluṟu by examining one area of Uluṟu: Muṯitjulu waterhole. I have chosen this area as, apart from the climb, it is the site at Uluṟu most visited by tourists, and it is the repository of many of Aṉangu's understandings of the landscape, both as a place of practical subsistence, and of intellectual associations.

Case study: Muṯitjulu Waterhole

Located on the south-eastern side of Uluṟu, one enters Muṯitjulu waterhole past the skeletons of dead bloodwood trees bearing testament to a failed 1970s land management plan which deprived them of water. Entry to the waterhole is along a path, densely lined with bush plum trees, with the sides of the rock rising up steeply on each side. Once at the waterhole, there is a platform: after rain the water flows underneath this platform; in times of drought it retreats to

a muddy puddle against the far wall of the rock. The water trickles down in a series of overflowing waterholes from the top of Uluṟu. After heavy rain this trickle can last for weeks before the flow eventually dries up. It is a peaceful place of butterflies and rainbow bee-eaters. After rain the percussion sound of frogs fills the air.

The importance of Mutitjulu waterhole is that it is a source of permanent water. The steep sides of rock provide shade for much of the day, so the water does not evaporate as quickly as other, more exposed waterholes. The waterhole is fed by a number of smaller waterholes on Uluṟu, and this contributes to the steady trickle of water replenishing the waterhole. However, if the waterhole dries up, Aṉangu are able to dig into the mud at the bottom of the waterhole, line the pit with leaves and twigs to filter the water, and the pit will fill up with water. The water table is not far beneath Mutitjulu waterhole: it is a permanent source of water because it is fed from above and below. Being a permanent source of water, Mutitjulu is also important for hunting. Animals come to the waterhole to drink, but the steep rock sides mean they are in an enclosed area, and so are easy to hunt.

The area is shady, being on the southern side of the rock, and has numerous food resources: bush tomatoes, native figs, acacia and grass seeds for bread, and native tobacco. Bloodwood trees near the waterhole bear scars in their bark where *piti* (women's carrying bowls) have been carved out. There are a number of habitation caves in this area, and many of them have artwork inside. Aṉangu maintain that painting was carried out at the hunters' cave within living memory, though no rock painting has been done in the past fifty years. The largest area of rock art is the Mutitjulu gallery: a deep overhanging

rock shelter that was protected by a line of native fig trees until they were destroyed by fire. This cave is painted over, layer upon layer, with motifs from *Tjukurpa* stories, tracks and bush tucker. Other rock shelters in the area also contain art work: there is magnificent rock art in a series of rock shelters close to the waterhole. The rock art not only reflects the way Aṉangu traditionally taught children practical skills and the *Tjukurpa*, but the ochres used in art reflect the trading that used to occur between Aboriginal groups. Ochre is not found in the area around Uluṟu, but was a trade item, used by Aṉangu to paint their bodies during ceremonies, and to paint on rock either for education, or for sacred purposes.

The rock shelters not only reflect the traditional way of life for Aṉangu, they also mark their more recent history. The art work has suffered dramatically through tourist visitation: Mountford's photographs taken in the 1940 expedition show that the art in the Muṯitjulu gallery was much more distinct. However, as visitors entered the caves to look at the art, they damaged it by touching it, and by unintentionally kicking up dust which effectively sandpapered the art from the rock walls. Tour guides also used to throw water over the art to make it glisten, and enable tourists to take clearer photographs. The condition of the artwork reflects the period when Aṉangu had no control over the behaviour of tourists, who could, and did, enter sacred sites. The contemporary situation, however, reflects how Aṉangu are consulted in providing interpretation within the Park, the sacred sites are fenced, and art sites are protected. Many of the art sites are concealed: though they may be close to the path, they are not marked and so tourists walk past oblivious to the delights close by. Those art sites that are available to tourist

access are protected by fences that prevent tourists from jostling into the site and rubbing against the art; by platforms that ensure that dust drops through the platform and so cannot be kicked up; and by signs that alert tourists to the fact that the area is a World Heritage site, and ask for their assistance in protecting it by not touching the art. Interpretative signs, designed in consultation with Anangu, give the Anangu meanings of the art, and how the art was used by them. Further reminders of Anangu's contemporary situation are the shade shelters erected in the area for use by Anangu tours. Built by the Park, the shelters illustrate the support the Park offers to Anangu, and its commitment to Anangu employment and development of Anangu businesses. They also are a reminder that Anangu are personally taking control of what is revealed to tourists, and how their culture is explained.

The area surrounding Mutitjulu waterhole is imbued with meaning from the *Tjukurpa*. The *Tjukurpa* story associated with this area is that of Kuniya and Liru.[3] The area just beyond the waterhole is where Kuniya and Liru fought a battle after Liru had killed Kuniya's nephew. Kuniya's entry to the battle is marked as a black wavy line on Uluru. Alongside is the black vertical line of her digging stick, the weapon she used to kill him in revenge. The mortal wounds inflicted by Kuniya are marked on Uluru as two cracks in the rock, and dark stains down the side of the rock are said to be Liru's blood. Where Kuniya dealt him a savage blow, severing his nose, a protruding part of the rock has sheared away. Liru dropped his shield here: this is still visible as a flat, circular rock with a hole in the centre, at the entrance to what is termed 'the hunters' cave'. Having exacted revenge, Kuniya released her anger by

spitting out poison over the land in this area: it is forbidden to eat the bush plums near the waterhole as they are said to be poisoned by Kuniya's anger. Her anger abated, Kuniya scooped up the body of her nephew and took him to the top of Uluṟu, where they transformed into a waterserpent called Wanampi, who dwells in the waterhole at the top of Uluṟu that feeds Muṯitjulu. Wanampi is a cantankerous waterserpent, and he must be approached with caution. For those for whom this is not their country, if they wish to drink from Muṯitjulu they must announce who they are to Wanampi first, then wait. If the water remains calm, Wanampi will allow them to use the water unharmed. If a sudden wind springs up, whipping the surface of the water, Wanampi disapproves of the supplicant, and it would be wise to beat a hasty retreat.

Aṉangu also explain that Wanampi controls the flow of the water from the top of Uluṟu. In times of drought, Aṉangu men will go to the waterhole and call out "kuka, kuka, kuka!" to Wanampi, asking him to release the water. However, if Wanampi is angered, despite the entreaties, he will keep the water to himself. When the Park first built the platform at Muṯitjulu, in 1995, it jutted far into the water. Aṉangu warned that this would displease Wanampi, but Park staff ignored them. Though Aṉangu had been shown computer generated photographs of the projected platform during the pre-construction consultation process, they did not register any objection until the platform was built. It is interesting to speculate that Aṉangu perceptions of the photographs were meaningless, and they only realised the impact of the platform once it was in situ. Once again, it could be argued that producing a photograph of the platform privileges the visual appreciation of the landscape, whereas Aṉangu

[3]See Chapter Three: *Tjukurpa* for details of the Kuniya and Liru story.

respond to the landscape on many other levels. Once the platform was built, Anangu complained vigorously, fearing sickness through Wanampi's displeasure. There was no rain for eight months. Finally the Park moved the platform back to the edge of the water hole, and it rained that week.

I unwittingly found myself the victim of Wanampi's displeasure. As a tour guide, I used to explain the final part of the Kuniya *Tjukurpa* whilst tourists were standing on the platform, and I told them how Wanampi was the serpent who controlled the water. Each time, a sudden wind would blow the surface of the water into waves, and I knew that Wanampi was displeased. Only a few weeks later did I discover that the name of Wanampi should not be said aloud in the waterhole. Thereafter, I explained the story before walking to the waterhole, never spoke the name of Wanampi in his hearing, and never again did the wind rise up.

There is another *Tjukurpa* story associated with the area: that of Lungkata. Having stolen an emu and cut it into chunks, Lungkata tried to escape the wrath of the Bellbird men by running around the side of Uluru, the stolen emu portions in his arms, scattering meat as he ran. Lungkata passed the entrance to Mutitjulu waterhole on his way to his hiding place. Just beyond the waterhole he dropped the emu's head, which is still visible as a huge boulder at the base of Uluru.

Another aspect of post-contact history occurred in the area around Mutitjulu waterhole. By the area of Liru's severed nose, amongst the concealed art caves, a terrible incident in Anangu-white history occurred. In 1934, an Anangu man, always referred to as Paddy Uluru's brother, was shot by Policeman MacKinnon. Anangu maintain that he was shot unlawfully after

sheltering other men who may have participated in a ritual killing and who were being pursued by the police. The culprits escaped, but Paddy Uluṟu's brother was shot whilst surrendering. The story itself has gone through some modification. On ranger-led walks in 1995, white rangers were told they must tell the story, as it reflected the mistreatment suffered by Aṉangu at the hands of whites. However, at the tour operators' workshop in March 1997, when participants asked about the story, they were told the story was no longer appropriate, and should not be related to tourists. By 1998, though, the story had been reinstated, and participants on that course were instructed to tell the story.

The area surrounding Muṯitjulu waterhole, therefore, can be seen as a record of many aspects of Aṉangu's dwelling in the land, and their history in the area. The associated *Tjukurpa* stories also detail the appropriate ways to use the land and its natural resources: the correct treatment of meat, access to water, do not harvest certain bush fruits. Tourists, however, have a very different appreciation of Uluṟu, and this will be the subject of the next section.

Tourist experiences of the landscape of Uluṟu

Essentially, when tourists visit Uluṟu, they experience it as a landscape that brings them into a dramatic and unpleasant awareness of their own bodies. Rather than appreciating Uluṟu as a record of history, subsistence pursuits and *Tjukurpa*; tourists find that the harsh environment, and the behaviour they have to adopt in order to survive, causes them to focus on their bodies, and body maintenance. This, in turn, affects the way they perceive Aṉangu.

Although it can be said that predominantly tourists encounter at Uluṟu a visual and physical experience, some tourists also have a spiritual or mystical appreciation of Uluṟu. Followers of the New Age have seen in Uluṟu a fund of energy which they believe can be harnessed and used to cure the earth of all sickness and violence. Such groups often appeal to Aṉangu for permission to conduct ceremonies at Uluṟu where this energy will be harnessed through prayer, incantations, meditation, or by hundreds of like-minded people joining hands in a huge circle around Uluṟu. Aṉangu are unimpressed by such exhortations, arguing that they know the *Tjukurpa*, they are responsible for the maintenance of the country, and they perceive such groups as attempting to appropriate their spirituality without understanding either it or Aṉangu culture. Applications to indulge in such activities are therefore met with a sharp rebuff: they are allied in sentiment to the 'Ayers Rock for All Australians' campaign which opposed the handback of Uluṟu, by assuming that the spirituality of Uluṟu can be encompassed by anyone considering himself sensitive enough to tap into it. Individuals may also consider they have a spiritual attachment to Uluṟu. Many of these are middle-aged American women who have read *Mutant Message Down Under* and are seeking a similar experience to bring meaning to their own lives. Though Aṉangu rarely come into personal contact with such people, once again they perceive such sentiments as an attempt to appropriate their spirituality, and they resist it.

Many tourists, however, claim to experience the negative impacts of Uluṟu's power in a phenomenon known as the 'returned rocks'. Often tourists take pebbles from around the base of Uluṟu, or chip chunks of the rock away to take home as souvenirs. However, once home, they come to hear

superstitions about the bad luck visited upon people who have such rocks. Either through fear of bad luck, or after suffering bad luck which they attribute to the rocks, tourists then post the stones back to the National Park. Each week letters and parcels arrive from around the world containing stones which tourists have taken, and wish to return. Some are so distressed they provide detailed maps of the exact position the rock was found, pleading for it to be returned to the same location in order to prevent or to cease suffering.[4] Extracts from some of the letters give an indication of the power that tourists attribute to fragments of Uluṟu:

> *- I'm returning them because I value Aboriginal culture. The other reason is that I am a bit superstitious.*
>
> *- Please return this rock to the Ayers Rock area. Since we were given this by friends four years ago it has brought bad luck on us all. They picked it up off the roadside but have since died, so I think you can have it back.*
>
> *- Due to a recent spot of bad luck and considering my options I have decided to return the piece of Ayers Rock I happened to acquire in July last year. In return I would like my conscious (sic) cleared of all guilt for taking the piece and my good luck returned for my own selfish reasons.*
>
> *- We visited on honeymoon and collected the stones to commemorate our honeymoon. We felt it was a power stone. Then we read in the*

[4]I am often asked if rangers actually do use the maps to return stones to the exact location from which they were taken. In actuality, rocks are piled in crates outside the ranger station, and periodically are emptied near Uluṟu. I am unaware of anyone writing for confirmation that their returned rock was actually replaced in the stated location, as despite returning the rock, bad luck has persisted.

newspaper that they bring bad luck because it's a symbol of the Aborigine.

- Do me a favour. Put back these Ayers Rocks. I've been home for a year and they've brought nothing but bad luck, even my girlfriend of five years who I went travelling with has left me. I must be cursed.

- Although we haven't had any bad luck we still feel we should return it.

- I did not feel superstitious about it being incredibly bad luck to take it away from the ancient site as my beliefs are nothing like the Aboriginals. But since, I have been persuaded to send it back by close friends, and am quite willing to do so as I respect the Aboriginal tribes beliefs and I am also flying home and do not want anything to go wrong for the other passengers sake as well as my own.

- I implore you to put it back on the Rock so that this nightmare will come to an end.

- Please return this stone I found in the sole of my shoe.

- Our son and his mate both souvenired a piece of the Rock. In 1993 our son was injured during a football match and is now a paraplegic and his mate was killed 11 months later in a plane crash. We wonder what will be next! In the event of this 'curse' being real, which I am inclined to believe it is, could you please include the enclosed rock with your next truck load and return it to its rightful place on the giant landmark. I thank you in anticipation and will be forever grateful to you when we 'turn the corner' and our luck changes.

Other letters detailed ill-health suffered by the collectors and their families, bankruptcy, failed businesses, and the end of long-term relationships. It costs some people considerable amounts to post the rocks back, but they are convinced that the rocks contain spiritual power which brings bad luck if the rocks are taken from their rightful place. Anangu do not actively discourage such superstitions, but Anangu rangers implore tourists not to take rocks as souvenirs, because the rocks belong in this location. On one ranger walk, Rupert Goodwin told tourists, "Don't take rocks from here as the spirits are in them, and they belong here."

Although some tourists do assert a spiritual connection with Uluru, predominantly their experiences are of being brought into an awareness of their own bodies. Particularly they are confronted by the abject in themselves in others, and this affects the way they perceive Anangu. In the remainder of this chapter, I will explore the theories of embodiment and phenomenology already introduced whilst discussing the ideas of subjectively dwelling in a landscape. I will show that these different experiences of 'dwelling' essentially determine how tourists and Anangu understand each other.

Theories of embodiment developed from French structuralism and state that lived experience of the world is always from the point of view of the individual subject, therefore such theories are devoid of historical or sociological content (Turner 1996: 78). The theory of embodiment arose out of dissatisfaction with Descartes' dictum of '*cogito, ergo sum*', and the mind/body dichotomy. Descartes argued that there was an absolute distinction

between the soul/mind and the body (Strathern 1996). This was rejected by French structuralists and by phenomenologists. Sartre pointed out that one's lived experience is always from the standpoint of the body; and in 1951 Gabriel Marcel wrote, 'my body does not have a contingent or exterior relationship to existence, since my body is always immediately present in experience' (quoted in Turner 1996: 76). Hence the body is not an instrument or object, but the self is the body, the ultimate starting point for apprehending the world. Falk has highlighted the ambiguity of the body, as people are described as both 'being' and 'having' a body. The body is visible, yet it disappears in the act of perceiving the outside world (Falk 1994: 1f).

Hallowell and Merleau-Ponty formulated the notion that it is through our bodies that we understand other people and perceive things. Hallowell was the first to propose a theory of the self oriented in space and time in relation to other objects, in 1955. He recognised the self as an object in a world of objects, which are culturally constituted through practice (Csordas 1994a: 6). His ideas were developed by Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception* in 1962. Merleau-Ponty asserts that our bodies are not objects, because we have no experience of them from outside ourselves: 'an object is an object only in so far as it can be moved away from me and ultimately disappear from my field of vision... The permanence of my own body is different in kind ... and is always presented to me from the same angle' (1962: 90). He writes, 'I observe external objects with my body, I handle them, examine them, walk round them, but my body itself is a thing which I do not observe' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 91). He announces that the Cartesian duality of mind and body is not useful, saying 'I am my body' and 'I have no means

of knowing the human body other than that of living it' (p.198). It is my contention that Merleau-Ponty foreshadows Leder's *The Absent Body* when he discusses the phenomenon of 'phantom limbs', 'It is precisely when my customary world arouses in me habitual intentions that I can no longer, if I have lost a limb, be effectively drawn into it, and the utilisable objects, precisely in so far as they present themselves as utilisable, appeal to a hand which I no longer have' (p.82).

These ideas were anticipated by Mauss's discussion of habitus. Habitus can be defined as unconscious habit, custom or acquired ability; it is historically variable. Mauss argues that the habitus is learned, not natural: at first acquiring the habitus is a conscious process, thereafter it becomes unconscious (Strathern 1996: 12). These ideas were developed by Bourdieu, who saw habitus as unconscious dispositions, psychologically internalised behaviour (Csordas 1990). These ideas are apparent in Strathern's illustration of the way different contexts require knowledge of a different habitus: if one moves into a new environment, one must resocialise the body into subtly different practices. Through learning these new practices, one becomes aware of the vast amount of knowledge one requires in order to survive anywhere (p.186). These ideas are obviously akin to Leder's dys-function whereby consciousness of the body is absent until something occurs to bring it into awareness. Strathern offers a critique of embodiment, arguing that it only refers to the human body: however artefacts may be extensions of the body, or be modelled on the body. However, he does see embodiment as a useful paradigm: it is a universally applicable theory that emphasises local

knowledge and constructions of the person, yet avoids the extreme subjectivism of postmodernism (p.188 ff.).

I agree that in normal everyday life we are unconscious of the fact of our embodiment, and so I follow Leder, Csordas and Strathern's view that we are only really aware of our bodies when our habits change or something unpleasant happens to us. Csordas writes, in the context of a critique of Hallowell's notions of the self, 'A fully phenomenological account would recognise that while we are capable of becoming objects to ourselves, in daily life this seldom occurs' (1990). Similarly, Biddle quotes Oliver Sacks, saying we only become aware of legness, when the property of legness is denied us (1993). Leder discusses how everyday life is characterised by the disappearance of our bodies from our awareness, and that we only become aware of it when the body is diseased or distressed in some way. He terms this the 'dys-appearance' of the body in consciousness (quoted in Csordas 1994).

A phenomenology of tourism

I wish to develop Csordas and Leder's theories that our bodies only become apparent to us at times of bodily distress, and argue that in the context of tourism at Uluṟu, tourists are aware of their bodies not only when they suffer bodily discomfort, but especially when they are brought into contact with the abject in themselves and others.[5] Kristeva defined the abject as the repugnance one feels when confronted by filth, waste, dung and food; and argues that it occurs because it reminds us that as humans, we are dangerously close to

animal states. So-called 'primitive' societies use the abject to mark out precisely where their culture is located, and to remove men from the realm of animals (Kristeva 1982: 12). The abject occurs when the distinction between the inside and the outside of the body is collapsed: the skin, previously thought to be a container around the body fails to ensure the integrity and purity of the self, and the border between life and death, human and animal is breached.[6] Thus the abject warns humans of their potential to revert to the animal or savage (Kristeva 1982: 12, 53).

Whereas for Kristeva the abject is associated with fear and repugnance, for Bakhtin this is celebrated in carnival, with what he terms 'grotesque realism' (Jefferson 1989). Grotesque realism is opposed to high art, concentrating on parody, bringing authority down to earth and focusing on the lower parts of the body: the belly, reproductive organs, defecation, reproduction, and copulation (Vice 1997: 164). Both Kristeva and Bakhtin are concerned with the boundaries of the body, whilst for Bakhtin this is positive, for Kristeva it is psychologically distressing to be reminded of one's bodily origins. For Bakhtin, the anus, mouth, vagina and penis are margins where the boundaries of the body are traversed (Vice 1997: 165). Bakhtin is concerned to show how the self experiences itself differently to the way it is perceived and experienced by others: this difference centres on the body. He argues that living inside the body, the self experiences the external body as a series of

[5] Biddle (1993) has discussed a similar phenomenon in relation to the practice of anthropological fieldwork.

[6] These notions are akin to Mary Douglas's writing on purity and danger, and her definition that dirt is simply 'matter out of place' (1984: *passim*). For Kristeva, bodily fluids such as blood, mucus and urine are indicators of health as long as they are retained within the body; but are a 'dangerous transgression of the boundaries' when they appear outside the body (Vice 1997: 164).

'disparate fragments' (Jefferson 1989). Sartre takes a similar approach, arguing that one relies upon others for a representation of oneself. This is problematic because others' representations may be inadequate, and so the self is vulnerable to others' representations (Jefferson 1989). By contrast, carnival collapses the distinction between actors and spectators, or self and others. With its emphasis on birth, death, copulation, defecation and eating, the carnival body of grotesque realism loses its individuality and is collectivised, as the boundaries between individual bodies, and between bodies and the outside world are collapsed and obscured (Jefferson 1989).

Tourists at Uluṟu are constantly brought into an awareness of their own bodies, and confronted by the abject in themselves and others. Rather than experiencing this as carnival, or grotesque realism, they seem very much to experience the breaching of the boundaries of their bodies as dangerous, frightening and repulsive. In turn, this affects the questions they have regarding Aṉangu, wishing to know not only how Aṉangu manage to survive in the harsh environment, but how Aṉangu cope with the abject in themselves. Tourists' questions are not restricted to Aṉangu: they also frequently ask about the maintenance and control of white locals' bodies, too.

When they arrive at Uluṟu, tourists are immediately struck by the intense temperature, which can rise to 46 degrees Celsius in the open plain, 56 degrees when close to Uluṟu, and over 60 degrees at the airport. The extreme temperatures mean that to avoid life-threatening heat stroke, it is essential to drink at least one litre of water per hour. Tour guides constantly exhort tourists to drink more water. If climbing Uluṟu or walking in the Park, the water must be carried with you. The second thing to strike tourists is the enormous

number of flies: in the months of December and January there are literally thousands of tiny bush flies crawling in your ears, eyes, up your nose and into your mouth. The majority of tourists are completely revolted by the flies, and purchase fly nets to protect their heads and faces. The fly nets are green, so the landscape is effectively viewed through a green veil. When tourists are wearing fly nets, it is difficult to distinguish their physical features, so tourists find they are travelling in groups with people whose appearance they may not recognise once the fly nets are removed. Apart from the flies, tourists are also concerned by the presence of snakes, spiders, scorpions, centipedes and biting bull-ants. Although they are unlikely to encounter a snake, the National Park does contain five deadly snakes, and so tourists are warned to be alert, to be careful where they tread, and not to put their hands into burrows in the sand dunes, or holes in the rock. That the area is potentially dangerous is reinforced by emergency alarms at the base of the climb and at Kata Tjuṯa, and all tour vehicles contain radios. Those who take four wheel drive tours will find that their vehicle is equipped with a huge aerial and RFDS radio in case of emergency.

The excessive heat means that tourists sweat much more than they are used to, and they must be careful to protect themselves from sunburn. They need to carry sunscreen and reapply it frequently. To protect themselves from the sun they also need special clothing: lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and a wide brimmed hat. Long, lightweight trousers are also advisable as they protect against the sun, and are a defence against insect and snake bites. If walking, tourists require sturdy boots, especially at Kata Tjuṯa, where the rough paths are the cause of numerous broken legs and twisted ankles. Many

tourists, limited in the amount of luggage they are able to transport, find they are ill-equipped to deal with the conditions they encounter at Uluṟu.

Apart from the precautions that must be undertaken to protect their bodies from heat, bites or accident; tourists find that the margins of their bodies are breached repeatedly, and they are confronted by the abject in themselves and others. Firstly, and most innocuously, they find themselves eating unusual foods such as kangaroo, crocodile, emu and camel, or they may try bush tucker such as honey ants, witchetty grubs and bush fruits. They may also indulge in barbecues in the desert. Many tourists drink champagne whilst watching the sun set on Uluṟu, or they may find that they drink more alcohol than usual whilst at Uluṟu either because they are thirsty, or because it contributes to relaxation on their holiday. This often results in tourists attempting to climb Uluṟu whilst suffering a hangover.

Secondly, the amount of water that must be consumed to avoid heat stroke results in tourists worrying about the provision of toilets within the Park. In actuality, most people find that they sweat so much that they do not need to pass water, but for those who do need toilet facilities, there is minimal provision within the National Park. Those toilets that are provided, at the base of the climb, at the Cultural Centre, and at Kata Tjuṯa, are insufficient for the numbers of tourists entering the Park each year. The toilets at the base of the climb and at Kata Tjuṯa are long-drop toilets, built to service a maximum of 200,000 people a year. As there are over 350,000 visitors a year, the toilets quickly fill up, so they do not compost effectively. Hence, the smell from these toilets, particularly those at the base of the climb, is revolting. Many tourists complain about the smell and condition of the toilets. Some prefer not to face

the rigours of the toilets provided, or if they are walking around Uluṟu or are at the Valley of the Winds walk at Kata Tjuṯa, find that there are no toilets nearby. In these instances, tourists have to venture into the bush for toiletting. Those who are part way up the climb have to relieve themselves on the path. As the path is narrow, and it is dangerous to stray far from it, tourists are confronted by the sight of each other defecating and urinating. Further, as the climb is so strenuous, and is often undertaken by those who are hung-over, unfit or who have just eaten breakfast, vomiting on the climb is common. Once again it is not possible to conceal oneself, and so tourists are faced by the spectacle not only of each other vomiting, but the sight of dried vomit in patches on the path.

Bodily boundaries may also be breached by accidents and injuries. As discussed, twisted ankles and broken limbs are common at Kata Tjuṯa, and on the climb. Minor cuts, grazes and bruises are also very common. Tourists are warned about the dangers of the climb and see plaques commemorating some who have died on Uluṟu. Further, there is local mythology regarding deaths on Uluṟu. A common theme of local gossip regarding deaths on the climb is that the victim is somehow dismembered: particularly victims are said often to lose their heads whilst falling from Uluṟu. Some white locals link these ideas to *Tjukurpa*, noting how *Tjukurpa* characters also seem to be dismembered or suffer injuries to the head, at Uluṟu. Forensic examination of the remnants of the clothing of Baby Azaria Chamberlain, who disappeared at Uluṟu in August 1980, also indicated she suffered injuries to her head and neck.

It has been shown that tourists are brought into a dramatic awareness of their own bodies by the extreme conditions at Uluṟu, and the necessity of

being aware of their bodies in order to ensure their physical safety. It is my contention that this forced appreciation of their physicality affects the interest tourists have in Anangu culture. Basically, tourists are made so uncomfortable by their bodies and confrontation with the abject, that they wish to know how Anangu manage to cope in this harsh environment. As was discussed in chapter five: *minga*, the questions that tourists ask about Anangu concentrate upon bodily maintenance and control. Tourists ask about health, housing, electricity and water, birth control, diabetes and alcoholism, death and burial, birth, clothing and food. Secondary interests are language and education.[7] They never ask about *Tjukurpa*. Tourists therefore wish to know how Anangu care for their bodies, how they encompass the abject in themselves. These concerns are also reflected in the questions that tourists ask Yulara locals: they wish to know where locals live, what their houses are like, where they shop for food, how long it takes to grow used to the heat and the flies.

To Anangu, however, the landscape is not a place where they are constantly confronted by the abject. To them it is a place of history, *Tjukurpa* and subsistence. Anangu have expressed many times the wish that visitors to their land learn about them, and particularly learn about the *Tjukurpa*, which not only underlines and proves their rightful ownership of the land, but informs the way the land is managed and controlled today. A tension occurs, therefore, where Anangu apprehend the land as a spiritual, political and ideological landscape; but to tourists it is a dangerous place where one

[7]Similar findings were recorded by a study conducted by the Conservation Commission in 1993. They asked tour operators working in Central Australia to list the ten most popular tourist questions regarding the natural environment. Questions about Aboriginal culture comprised 10% of all questions asked, and the questions concerning Aboriginal culture focused on bush tucker, uses of plants and where Aboriginal people live (CCNT 1993).

encounters the abject. Anangu force tourists to conceive of the land as an intellectual place through the messages and interpretative boards they construct in the Park, and at the Cultural Centre. At the base of the climb, tourists are told that Anangu disapprove of the climb as it is the site of the path taken by the Mala men during an important ceremony. At the Cultural Centre, though there is a small display of bush tucker, the majority of the Centre concentrates on three of the *Tjukurpa* stories, and how the Park is run according to *Tjukurpa* principles. Through this emphasis on the political, ideological, and religious, tourists are coerced into an intellectual appreciation of the landscape. Thus, Anangu culture impinges on the tourist experience of the landscape at Uluru by forcing an intellectual decision to be made about an essentially physical experience (the climb). Those who decide not to climb are then faced by more intellectual appreciations of the landscape, through interpretative walks and displays at the Cultural Centre. Anangu therefore force tourists to shift from a subjective, historically and sociologically contextless experience of Uluru; to an intellectual appreciation of the landscape which is imbued with historical, spiritual and political concerns.

Conclusion

At Uluru, tourists are constantly faced with the abject in themselves and in others. The boundaries of their bodies are breached by vomit, sweat, faeces, urine, blood, flies, strange foods and alcohol. The necessity of protecting their bodies from the excessive heat and burning sun, the threat of poisonous insects and snakes, and the problems of finding adequate toilet facilities, cause tourists to become aware of their own bodies. In turn, this influences the

interest they have in Anangu culture. They are concerned to learn how Aboriginal people cope with their own bodies, how they control the abject in themselves. By contrast, Anangu have learned through long association how to live in this harsh environment; and to them it is a landscape imbued with history and ideology. They want tourists to appreciate the Aboriginal perception of the environment, and in effect, force such a consideration, through their emphasis on *Tjukurpa*. Though the majority of tourists visit Uluru with the intention of climbing the rock, an intensely physical activity, messages from Anangu regarding their opposition to the climb force tourists into an intellectual appreciation of the landscape. The corporeal consciousness experienced by tourists brings them into direct conflict with the interests of Anangu, who want them to appreciate the landscape as an ideological landscape based on *Tjukurpa*. Anangu desire this as *Tjukurpa* is evidence of their rightful position as owners of the land. Therefore a conflict occurs between the subjective experience of tourists, and the political motivations and spiritual responsibilities of Anangu.

Conclusion

"I'm Anangu maru: I'm a blackfella. Look how black I am, and how white you are. But it makes no difference that I'm so black, because inside, the blood is still the same red. It's good that you sit round and listen to me: this is my land, my place; and it's good when people listen and learn from me." Andrew Uluru.

Summary

This thesis set out to explore the effects of mass tourism on Anangu at Uluru. Two scenarios were envisaged, based on historical Aboriginal response to white interference: cultural loss and dispossession, or resilience and adaptability. It has been shown that in the situation of imposed tourism at Uluru, Anangu have demonstrated perspicacity, adaptability, and knowledge of whitefella practice: in effect Anangu impact upon tourism. Their effect on tourism is manifested through coercing tourists to consider Anangu culture. Anangu have a distinctive message regarding their place in the landscape: as traditional custodians of Uluru, rightful owners of the area, not through winning a land claims case, but through their knowledge of, and engagement with, the *Tjukurpa*. These are distinctively Aboriginal ways of asserting a connection with the landscape, evident in land claims cases, and now utilised in regard to tourism at a site which has a history of whitefella appropriation.

Tourists are forced into an appreciation of Anangu culture, and their role as traditional owners in several ways: through the use of Pitjantjatjara on signs within the Park; displays of *Tjukurpa* in the Cultural Centre; interpretative walks and the training of non-Aboriginal guides; and in

promoting the 'we do not climb' message. This last is most effective in shaping the tourists' experience. As has been shown, tourists to Uluṟu become very aware of their own bodies, and this influences the interest they have in Aṉangu. Having been made aware of the problems associated with looking after their own bodies in this harsh environment, tourists in turn wish to ascertain how Aṉangu maintain *their* bodies. Tourists are much less interested in *Tjukurpa*: the very thing Aṉangu want them to learn about. However, on the issue of the climb, tourists, wishing to indulge in a highly physical activity, are forced into considering the land and the climb from an essentially spiritual angle, that promoted by Aṉangu. Tourists therefore are forced from a physical apprehension of the landscape into an intellectual appreciation of the landscape as a place with spiritual connotations.

Evaluation of this study

This study brings together and develops research already carried out into the fields of tourism, Aboriginal culture and embodiment. Tourism studies have predominantly concentrated on the effects of tourism on a host population, initially viewing host populations as passive receptors of invasive tourism. Later studies acknowledged that host populations may use tourism to support their culture. A number of societies in New Guinea see tourism as a means to preserve cultural traditions, and provide a useful income. Seeing tourism as inevitable, they have decided to engage with it and make it profitable for them both culturally and economically. Cultural creolisation is often cited as resulting from mass tourism, however this thesis has shown how the 'host' society, although receiving relatively little money from tourism, uses mass

tourism to promote political, spiritual and ideological messages about its culture, land, and role in its maintenance. Far from cultural creolisation, tourism has strengthened Anangu cultural traditions. Further, this study has presented a holistic view of tourism at Uluru, analysing the relationship between the National Park, the Mutitjulu Community and the Yulara resort. Whereas other studies concentrate on tourists' attitudes or motivations for travel, or focus on the host population, this study documents the attitudes of all the actors in the area: Anangu, Park rangers, Yulara locals and tourists. The attitudes of Park rangers towards tourism and Aboriginal people have not been fully documented previously, and very few studies document the attitudes and culture of workers in tourist resorts.

Studies of Aboriginal people have developed from traditional anthropological interests in the Dreaming, kinship and subsistence, to documenting the contemporary Aboriginal situation and encompassing land rights, urban Aborigines and the notions of Aboriginality. Aboriginal understanding and manipulation of political processes has been widely documented. This study develops the corpus on Aboriginal engagement with the wider society by documenting their use and manipulation of tourism to further a political message about the validity of their role as owners of Uluru. Many studies have been completed on Aboriginal involvement with tourism, or involvement with National Parks, but they have tended to concentrate on economic and employment aspects of this engagement. This thesis states explicitly the different agendas of Western tourism and Aboriginal people, and explicates the problems associated with direct Aboriginal involvement with

tourism, but shows that indirect engagement may be beneficial to Aboriginal people both economically and ideologically.

Writings on embodiment have concentrated on medicine: that people become aware of their own bodies through pain, injury and illness. There have been no studies of embodiment as an aspect of tourism. This thesis demonstrates how tourists at Uluṟu become aware of their own bodies, and how this affects the concerns they have over Aboriginal culture. This in turn sets up an antagonism between the concerns of tourists, and the agenda that Aṉangu have for tourism; and in effect tourists are forced from a physically uncomfortable appreciation of the landscape into an intellectual appreciation of it. No other studies have documented this.

Limitations of the study and further research

The study is focused on a single area: Uluṟu. It is possible that Aboriginal people involved with tourism in less prominent areas are unable to use tourism to promote messages they may have about their culture. Aṉangu at Uluṟu are privileged in that Uluṟu is the focus of much media attention, and so Aṉangu are guaranteed a voice in the mass media regarding pronouncements about the rock. Other Aboriginal communities may not be so fortunate. Studies of other Aboriginal communities' engagement with tourism, and their motivations for engaging with it should be studied to ascertain what messages they wish tourists to acquire, and why. It may be expected that Aboriginal communities fighting a land claim or opposing a mining venture may use tourism to argue their position as rightful owners and custodians of the land.

Similarly, the situation of Aboriginal people living and working in National parks requires further study, particularly the relationship between Park rangers and Aboriginal communities. From conversations with those working in National Parks in other parts of Australia, it would appear that appropriation of aspects of Aboriginal culture is common. However, this needs to be fully documented. White workers in indigenous communities also seem to disappear in anthropological writing, though their engagement with the indigenous population, and ways in which they form a community are both fascinating and important to anthropological enquiry. Similarly, the relationship of National Parks towards the tourism industry in other areas could be documented.

This study is the first to demonstrate tourists' embodiment, but it relies on tourists experiencing a particularly harsh environment, one which is marketed as a place of physical adventure. It would be useful to ascertain the embodiment of tourists in other parts of Australia, places such as Sydney which are promoted as places to experience high culture, and not as places for exploration and adventure. Also, tourists' embodiment in other harsh environments could be studied, to ascertain if an awareness of their bodies is a common experience in such locations, and how such an experience affects tourist appreciation of the landscape.

In the introduction to this thesis I expressed a concern to examine the redistribution of money Anangu gain from tourism, as guides, artists or directors of tourism businesses. As the Mutitjulu community was wary of what they perceived as further anthropological interference, I decided it would be politic to abandon this line of enquiry. However, casual conversations with

Anangu suggest that money received as wages from employment as a ranger may be redirected to kin in other communities (this is certainly the case for Rupert Goodwin). Further, when the income from the sale of Park entry tickets is allocated to Anangu, the money is spent on whomever needs it. Charlie Peipei explained to me that because his niece did not have a car, part of the money his wife Kunbry would receive from the gate takings would be spent on a car for the girl. It is common at the time of division of the gate money that Anangu spend all of their allocation on cars for themselves and various members of their family. However, detailed research is necessary in this regard so that accurate theories may be formulated.

Finally, I would recommend a follow-up study of the situation at Uluru. It can be seen that the past few years have been times of upheaval and change, and this has resulted in the mediums through which they promote their message of the validity of Aboriginal culture being subject to variation and disagreement: the 'we don't climb' message has only recently been concretised, and there is yet to be agreement over the status of the story concerning the murder of Paddy Uluru's brother. It is likely that in years to come, these media will be unified into a coherent and undisputed body of information, whose outstanding message is that of Anangu's attitude towards Uluru: definitely all ours.

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